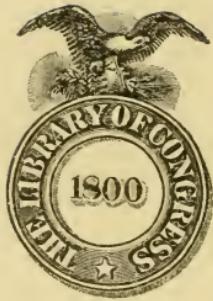




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THE AUTHOR

# Green Leaves

## POEMS

BY

*Elvira J. Loring-Scales-Green*

of Watsonville, Cal.

Illustrations by

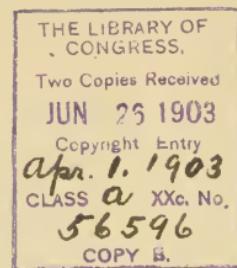
PEDRO J. LEMOS

"We do not choose the pathway  
Which with weary feet we tread,  
But are by a wise Providence  
Through life's great mystery led."

—*A Bachelor's Letter*



PACIFIC PRESS PUBLISHING CO.  
OAKLAND, CAL.



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*To*

*MRS. F. A. LORING*

My dear friend  
for her encouragement and help  
in writing this little volume  
I lovingly dedicate  
this work



## P R E F A C E

*To the Public:—*

As it is customary to preface a few lines to introduce any new work, and as I like to know something of the personality of the writer, I will introduce this little volume by giving a few brief incidents in my own life. In case you are inclined to criticize, you will please pass the errors and excuse them; while if there is merit, I hope you readers will find pleasure in reading these poems. The writing of them has helped me to pass many hours which would otherwise have been very tedious. They have been written with my left hand, as I have been without my right one for a great many years. Notwithstanding, I have always made a comfortable living, never have had to beg, and have managed to pay my honest debts.

Wishing you all a few pleasant hours in the perusal of “Green Leaves,” I am

Very sincerely yours,

MRS. E. J. SCALES-GREEN.



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## Mystery

Alone I stroll by the low, restless sea,  
And list to its tones of sweet mystery.  
Solemn and sad, or buoyant and glad,  
Read we the waves by the moods of our minds,  
Till echoes are borne on the wings of the winds.

Lovingly wooed by the glint on the waves,  
Reminded of requiems said at the graves,  
Ever and always with music so sweet,  
We all of life's elements blindly entreat,  
“Oh, who holds the key to this sobbing refrain?  
Will some great interpreter kindly explain? .

“What chases our sorrows and swallows our woes,  
Till grief and all discord dissolve like the snows,  
And ever a restfulness lulls o'er the senses,  
As the sweet, loving hand of a father dispenses?  
Oh, who will this mystery kindly unfold?  
It's wrapped in the ocean depths, fold upon  
fold.”

## A Soldier's Letter

I write to you, dear Mary,  
Write, giving back your vow;  
For I think, perhaps, that you  
Would like your freedom now.

This life, so full of changes,  
Brings sadness to the heart;  
And the change that time has wrought  
For us must tear our lives apart.

It's cost me many a struggle,  
But I would fain be strong,  
And not commit against you,  
Dear, a great and fearful wrong.

For life is not a pastime;  
Don't let your heart deceive,  
Or for a moment once forget  
That I've an empty sleeve.

So I give you back your promise,  
But until life is o'er  
The treasures of those bright, fond months  
Shall memory hold in store.

But the dreams that I permitted  
My fancies then to weave,  
Are all dispelled, yes, quite dispelled,  
By this swinging, empty sleeve.

My love shall be unchanging,  
Your life unfettered, free,  
And all I ask, dear Mary, is  
That you'll remember me.

And in each day's devotion  
Pray, and with faith believe,  
For him who, through life's toilsome way,  
Must wear this empty sleeve.

### Sound

How much of life's enjoyment is ever to be found  
In the little waves of music, which we designate as  
sound.

When wakened in the morning by the singing of  
the birds,  
Or loving, varied accents of sweet and kindly words,  
Did you ever think to notice just the difference in life  
If aroused by sounds of discord, of turbulence and  
strife?

The meadow lark gives pleasure with every joyous  
thrill,

While every note is plaintive from poor, lone whip-  
poor-will.

The rippling stream, the cooing doves, the droning  
of the bees,

The sighing winds through forests, the raindrops on  
the leaves,

Each holds its lotted measure of rich and joyous  
sound,

Till earth is filled with treasure with which sea and  
air abound.

There are tones of cordial greeting, and friendly,  
social cheer,  
Which, though told in foreign language, are pleasing  
to the ear.  
How the ringing shouts of laughter from some little  
stranger boy  
Will waken through our being a sudden sense of joy!  
Earth holds no sweeter music than the laughter of a  
child;  
Who dare to frown upon it are worse than creatures  
wild.

When the halls have long been silent, how it fills the  
heart with dread  
To hear the well-known footsteps of some lordly  
tyrant's tread!  
'Tis thus we note the changes, like the ringing of the  
bells,  
And learn the different language with which each  
its story tells.  
Oft the source of bitter anger or the cause of joy  
profound  
Can be traced alike to discords or harmonies of  
sound.

## Unwritten Music

I would list to a song of music,  
To a song that's all our own;  
Just speak the words which compose it,  
I will only choose the tone.

No studied rules are needed  
For a transport of delight;  
I've caught it from the whispered winds,  
In the stillness of the night.

Though the music was all unwritten,  
It oft came between the bars,  
And the mystery of translating  
Is a secret with the stars.

Words treated of many a subject—  
But the tone was always love.  
My heart is restless and yearning,  
Like the captive carrier dove.

Still, I know, when this weary waiting  
Is forever at an end,  
That our souls will be united  
In that harmony which blends.

So I will try to be content  
With this echo in my heart;  
And, although unwritten music,  
Of that song it is a part.

### Sweet Memories

Wrapped in a coat, dumped in a heap,  
On a lounge in the office I'm trying to sleep;  
Not a sound breaks the silence, awaking my fears,  
But memory is busy with past buried years.

Like mists through the valley preceding the rain,  
A troop of sweet fancies are flooding my brain.  
I see the brown hilltops just flecked with the snow,  
And fancy a presence I once used to know.

There thrills through my being a rapture of bliss,  
And just one brief moment I'm happy with this;  
I know the deep joy which you could not control,  
For I was allowed just one glimpse of your soul.

It came all unbidden, flashed up through your eyes,  
For truth has no semblance wherewith to disguise  
A foretaste of heaven which to angels belongs,  
When time and eternity merge into songs.

Sweet rapture in living frail mortals attain,  
Which Fate in his turning doth ruthlessly maim;  
These bright, golden moments, so wholly complete,  
Sweet memory alone has the power to repeat.

So real are my fancies, I see your dear face,  
And ask that it follow to sleep's sweet embrace.  
Oh, say not forever that memories must die,  
But bring this dear scene when I last close mine eye!

If granted this prayer, then the change will seem  
sweet,  
When I sink to rest in the long, dreamless sleep.

### Nancy and Joe

Nancy was raised in the city,  
But married plain, country Joe.  
She chose from the whole profession,  
And surely she ought to know.

How they ever got acquainted  
Is something strange to me;  
But she was plump and pretty  
As ever she could be.

While to Joseph's manly qualities  
A woman couldn't be blind;  
If you searched the whole creation,  
His equal was hard to find.

I suppose Joe tried to please her,  
Taking that wedding tour.  
She dreaded the thing like mischief,  
And wasn't happy an hour.

She said, "If only the fashions  
Had a bit of common sense  
I'd have stayed at home with Joseph,  
And saved that great expense."

But she didn't have the courage,  
Those blissful, dreamy days,  
Though she'd rather have the money  
In forty different ways.

The old front fence is nearly down,  
And sadly needs repairs;  
The wide front hall looks like distress—  
No railing on the stairs.

The roof leaks on the cow-shed  
(We'd planned to build a barn),  
But when I spoke to Joe that night,  
He "didn't care a darn."

She would rather have had a carriage  
Behind those spanking bays,  
But she won't find no time to ride  
These busy working days.

She's brought a grand piano  
(I wonder when she'll play);  
She'd better lock the thing right up,  
And throw the key away.

Joe asked me what I thought of her.  
I answered, "Can she cook?"  
Joe said, "You bet; for I will buy  
A splendid buck-eye book."

Perhaps I'm some to blame myself,  
And put it in his head,  
But Joe is awful fussy  
About his cakes and pie and bread.

In book lore I am ignorant,  
I've studied men, instead;  
If you have a bit of comfort,  
Depends on how they're fed.

Well, things run smoothly on for months;  
I done the bigger part,  
Until I caught her practicing  
That new game called Delsarte.

In anger and surprise I said,  
"If you've your senses found,  
You'd better take the dusting brush  
And sweep the cobwebs down."

She said that I was country green;  
I called her city smart,  
And asked her what she thought she'd find  
A reaching for high art.

I took my clothes and went away  
To visit Sally Ann,  
Though we expected company  
And another hired man.

I stayed away a month or two,  
And then I started back,  
And learned a lesson as I rode  
Upon that railroad track.

Besides conductor, engineer,  
And brakeman on each side,  
We had to take a fireman,  
'Fore ever we could ride.

When I got home I found that Joe  
And Nancy'd had a duff.  
Although she'd cooked her very best,  
Joe called it "horrid stuff."

I didn't take no notice,  
Just asked them how they did;  
Poor Nancy looked all jaded out,  
And went away and hid.

Then I asked Joe if he should build  
His new barn right away;  
He said that he had tried to find  
A carpenter that day.

Why don't you build your barn yourself,  
And thus you'd save the pay?  
The lumber all lies on the ground,  
And has been there since May.

Joe looked surprised, but merely said,  
"We hav'n't any tools;  
And if we had, about this work  
These men are pesky fools."

"Looks likely you can't build a barn  
With lumber all sawed out;  
Your father built a house of logs,  
And he weren't half so stout."

"Now Joe," I said, and riz right up,  
"You can yourself select,  
For I've brought home a little book  
Which they call Architect.

“Now Joe,” I said quite earnestly,

“You practice on the barn,

And let Nan go to cooking-school;

I’m sure that she could l’arn.

“A seamstress, laundress, dairy-maid,

A nursery girl and cook,

You’ll scarcely find combined in one,

And so you needn’t look.

“Times keep a changing for the men;

Folks didn’t use to fail

When they cut their grain with sickles,

And thrashed it with a flail.

“All day they plowed with oxen,

Made the children’s shoes at night,

Or mended harnesses instead,

If they could have a light.

“Those days men worked contentedly,

’Thout carrying sich sail;

They didn’t sit up half the night

To read their daily mail.”

Here Joe broke in, and tried to tell

How Nancy burned her cake,

And how she fussed about the stove;

It smoked and wouldn’t bake.

That when she brought it on for tea,  
They found it wasn't done;  
And when they tried to cut it  
Was when the fuss begun.

Nan said she never, never saw  
Such dreadful, dreadful wood,  
And just declared she couldn't cook;  
Joe said his mother could.

Nan said she envied Adam's wife  
Far, far above all other,  
For surely he could never brag  
To her about his mother.

Since Adam's day all human folks  
Have a little love and strife;  
But where's the man, I'd like to know,  
Who'd live without a wife.

### *I Used to Sing*

I used to sing an old, old song,—it's somehow slipped away,—  
And, strangely as it now appears, it's haunted me all day.  
I sung this song most sweetly in the merry month of May.

The words I've quite forgotten, but the chorus runs  
this way:

“Oh! the old men they are old, and the old men  
they are gray;

But the young men they are so full of fun,—  
Away, old men, away—away, old men, away.”

Life seemed just filled with sunshine, no shadows  
crossed the way;

My feet kept time to music, as lambkins skip and  
play;

My bounding heart with rapture leaped to greet the  
opening day;

And with the birds most happily I sang this rounde-  
lay:

“Oh! the old men they are old, and the old men they  
are gray;

But the young men they are so full of fun,—  
Away, old men, away—away, old men, away.”

The time has kept on turning, shadows fall across  
the way;

And I have kept on singing, but have changed my  
tune, you'll say;

For what about the young men, oh, the young men  
of to-day!

There's none that's worth a nickel till they're  
sprinkled well with gray.

Oh! the young men they are young, and the young  
men they are gay;  
But there's none that's worth a nickel till they're  
sprinkled well with gray.

Alas! I learned my song too soon, as lassies of  
to-day

Are thinking that the chorus runs quite right the  
other way.

Oh! when they've learned their music, and through  
glasses truly see,

"Tis then they'll change their chorus, and quite with  
me agree,

That young men they are young, and young men  
they are gay;

But none are worth a nickel till they're sprinkled  
well with gray.

The truth has long my story proved, no matter which  
they say;

If strains are kept in harmony, there's music any-  
way.

It's when old maids and widows sing they count the  
old men gay,

And get the time in discord, and mix things every  
way.

Oh! the old men they are old, and the young men  
they are gay;

But though neither's worth a nickel, yet they'll have  
them either way;

Yes, they'll have them either way.

## Faith in God

I sit in the twilight, musing, living o'er the silent past,  
And dear, familiar faces come vividly and fast.  
'Tis hushed, no bounding footsteps will frighten them away;  
Ah! they gather not so closely in the tumult of the day.

There's one dear face among them I would single from the rest,  
With loving arms would clasp him once more to my aching breast.  
In his life, in the hush of twilight, I taught Christ's prayer anew,  
Of God, the all-wise Parent; he wondered, "Can it be true?"

I told of His loving-kindness, that He doeth all things well,  
That those who implicitly trust Him shall one day with Him dwell.  
In those bright days of sunshine, 'twas easy thus to say,  
"I'll trust the all-wise Parent; He surely knows the way."

But when our darling sickened, when he suffered so  
with pain,  
And they said, with awe-struck faces, "He will  
never walk again,"  
Then came a cloud like midnight, shutting out my  
faith in God,  
For I thought that one so trusting needed not His  
chastening rod.

Years, all fraught with life's deep anguish, passed  
to find him crippled still;  
While I murmured night and morning, "Guide me  
by Thy sovereign will."  
In the mystery of silence, he has vanished from my  
sight,  
But oft I feel his presence in the shadows' changing  
light.

Thus I sit and wait and ponder, asking here with  
bated breath,  
"Is the mystery of living folded in the shroud of  
death?"  
Still I ask with vain repining that a miracle repeat,  
For I find that I am listening for his crutch upon  
the street.

## My Love

My love, she is not the fairest,  
Judging by the molded clay,  
But her grace and kindly manners  
Hold me subject to her sway.

From her eyes sped cupid's arrows,  
Just to wound my aching heart;  
But the music in her laughter  
Brought far more than healer's art.

In her sweet and subtle presence  
I have found such countless worth,  
That it's far above comparing  
With the sordid dross of earth.

Sweetest, dearest of earth's treasures  
Is the gift of human love;  
All the one that we are promised  
We shall bear to realms above.

## Going Home

To-day I go home, and can hardly wait  
For these few last hours to drag;  
I've counted the months and counted the weeks;  
Then over the days I bragged.

But since this day peeped up in the east  
It has seemed interminably long;  
Sometimes when I'm looking at the clock,  
I think it's decidedly wrong.

But now it is five, and the train makes a start,  
And I shall be moving along;  
Although I am silent, demure, and shy,  
My heart is in tumult of song.

It is not this going, this speeding away,  
And constantly changing of motion,  
That quickens my pulse, and kindles my eye,  
And fills my heart with emotion.

It's not just leaving the dull, old town  
(For I have had pleasure and profit,  
And found many friendships decidedly warm,  
And so have no reason to scoff it).

But I am so happy to know as I go,  
When the train pulls up to the station,  
That friends will be waiting, with glances of love,  
And ended will be my probation.

I shall hear the scamper of glad little feet,  
And the cry of exultant joy;  
And meet at the gate, where they lovingly wait,  
My wife, my girl, and my boy.

## One Winter Night

On a winter night, both clear and cold,  
I saw a sight that I've never told;  
But, if I tell it now to you,  
You'll never question that it's true.

I sat by the fire in a quiet nook,  
And in my lap held a lovely book,—  
Or it held me with close attention,—  
The flight of time I need not mention.

But it had slipped far into night  
Ere I roused myself in half affright,  
And yawned and thought to shake the fire,  
Then arose, intending to retire.

“I must for caution turn the key,  
And just peep out, in hopes to see . . .  
Some other light as late as mine,—  
Excepting where they're selling wine.”

The moon was out in silvery light,  
And just across, within plain sight,  
An object was—so very strange  
It held me spellbound by the change.

Though there so plainly in full view,  
Whether it were persons, one or two,  
Or whether it were none at all,  
It looked so much like a huge ball,

“It is a mystery,” I said.  
It at that moment raised its head.  
It is a man, a Hercules,  
And some one with him, I believe.

And thus they stood; while I stood thinking,  
“They’re some men, likely, who’ve been drinking,  
Or boon companions, mischief plotting,  
Their shadows on the snow-drifts blotting.”

And thus I stood in wonder gazing,  
The objects seemed so quite amazing;  
What can it be that goes aright  
In these small hours of the night?

Wonder of wonders! if I’m human,  
Part of that object is a woman.  
“It’s plain; I understand,” I said,  
“Just why it was he lost his head,  
“To catch her words, or gain by stealth  
Some kisses for the little elf.”  
I wondered then I’d been so stupid,  
For any fool would know ‘twas Cupid.

He dallied there full half an hour,  
As he were still in Eden's bower,  
At his old game in public marts,  
Where most successful swapping hearts.

She, little Hebe, could hardly stand,  
And he held close upon each hand.  
Sometimes, as they would change position,  
I plainly saw her opposition.

Ah, ha! she understands her art;  
She's aiming at his very heart;  
Although she seems to be unwilling,  
Well knows she that her looks are killing—

But what has broken on their spell  
But the faint sound of sleighing bells.  
Their hurried lips in kisses meet,  
And he goes flying down the street.

And through a side street he has gone,  
And all that way is clear as dawn;  
While she moves on, demure and slow,  
As if she'd come alone just so.

The horseman, in a swell box-sleigh,  
Came swiftly, and I heard him say,  
“O Christine, now this is not fair;  
I searched the ball-room everywhere,

Till some one said you'd run away;  
You know I'd take you any day."  
But she just simply said, "Good-night,"  
And quickly fled from out of sight.

But many a night, when lamps were out,  
I've seen her come and look about,  
As if she'd lost some treasure there,  
Which she was searching everywhere.

And ere the leafing of the trees  
I saw her meet her Hercules,  
Who claimed her as his only mate,  
As if the thing were planned by fate.

He fumbled in his pockets then,  
With all the awkwardness of men,  
And said, "Christine, I have the ring  
Which I assured you I would bring.

And now we'll go and find the parson,  
And help him Hymen's knot to fasten:"  
While Pete, poor Pete, the man who missed her,  
Consoled himself with her half sister.

## For Decoration Day

To-day marks a mile-stone in the weary lives  
Of women who once were brave soldiers' wives;  
And, though the heart breaks, they hope and they  
pray  
That some one will decorate those graves far away.

## Moving Shadows

I can see some moving shadows as they glide upon  
the wall,  
And presume these silent pictures are familiar to  
you all,  
People riding in a rocker, like a ship upon the sea,  
A well-grown man and baby that is plain as it can be.

The shadows seem quite happy as they're swinging to  
and fro;  
I fancy there is music of a song we all well know:  
"We'll live and love, my little one, and never mind  
the weather;  
You're just as good as daddy wants, and just as  
sweet as ever."

The shadows now are kissing, as back and forth  
they go;  
The swaying, gliding motion is plainly getting slow;

Four hands are linked together, as one can plainly  
see,  
And the little baby shadow has a foot upon each  
knee.

Now the shadow takes a tumble, little head just  
sweeps the floor,  
Till gurgling, choking, laughing, it is righted up  
once more.  
The great arms now are folding that little one to  
keep,  
And music must be changing to a lullaby of sleep.

Ah! they're doubled up together, till they look like  
one huge ball,  
As with forward, upward motion they float across  
the wall;  
I rise to follow after, lest I lose their kind "Good-  
night,"  
And am kissing those two shadows, ere they vanish  
from my sight.

## An Invitation to John Doe to a Patriotic Party

We're going to have a party (say George Washington  
and me);

If you get an invitation, the elite you'll surely see.  
And when you see our party, you'll pronounce it  
just immense,

For, when we get to blowing in, we never count  
expense,—

With beer and oysters and champagne and chicken  
fricassee,

If any patriotic man will lend the cash to me.

At the old house on the corner that's known as  
Poverty Flat;

The rooms are rather small, I know, and poorly  
furnished at that;

But we'll have such martial music,—a fife and big  
bass drum,—

That all the neighbors thereabout will think we're  
surely some,—

With beer and oysters and champagne and chicken  
fricassee,

If any patriotic man will lend the cash to me.

I've been studying how to invite you, and wonder-  
ing if you'd come,

Calculating on the expenses and where I can borrow  
the sum.

We number just four hundred—every one is on the  
square—

And the cream of high society will every one be  
there,—

With beer and oysters and champagne and chicken  
fricassee,

If any patriotic man will lend the cash to me.

Just bring your last enamorer; she'll think you're  
in the swim,

And will judge you have the ducats by the way you  
blow 'em in;

For a patriotic party is a very swell affair.

And you'll never count expense, nor miss of being  
there.

All those who are not invited will surely feel the  
slight,—

While we who are strictly in it will claim it's out  
of sight.

So just come on, let's whoop her up this twenty-  
second night,

And show our loyal patriotism as social, shining  
lights,—

With beer and oysters and champagne and chicken  
fricassee;

I think you are the very man to lend the cash to me.

## The Turned Picture

I grew a fair and sturdy youth, my days were full  
of dreams,  
I chased the shadows and the lights along the pebbly  
streams;  
And time rolled on, the years went by, unheeded  
as they passed.  
I know, as I look backward now, they flew by all  
too fast.  
I changed from boy to manhood, and chafed beneath  
its cares;  
Oh! often were forgotten my mother's earnest  
prayers.

Though reckless as a sailor, my hand knew not a  
crime,  
But slander tossed my name about with many a  
scornful chime,  
Till at last I grew defiant, and wished the world were  
dead,  
And, like all other prodigals, upon such husks I  
fed;  
Then wearied, worn, and suffering, I sought the old,  
old home,  
Where shielded, warmed, and welcomed, I hoped no  
more to roam.

But change had wrought such havoc, I scarcely  
knew the place,  
And felt its very shabbiness added much to my  
disgrace.

There was no response of welcome; they wished me  
truly dead,

Though I have never learned it from any word they  
said;

But through their cold indifference, in so many  
cruel ways,

Until the darkness of the nights was brighter than  
the days.

One day I sought my mother's room, where all our  
pictures hung,

And where so oft in former days I round her knees  
had clung.

Upon its walls I fondly gazed, and plainly counted  
all;

But one hung in the shadow, with its face turned  
toward the wall.

The clods of earth more kindly fall on our untimely  
dead,

Than acts like these by kindred hands, where hearts  
are crushed instead.

This froze my heart, and never more their sympathy  
I'll crave,

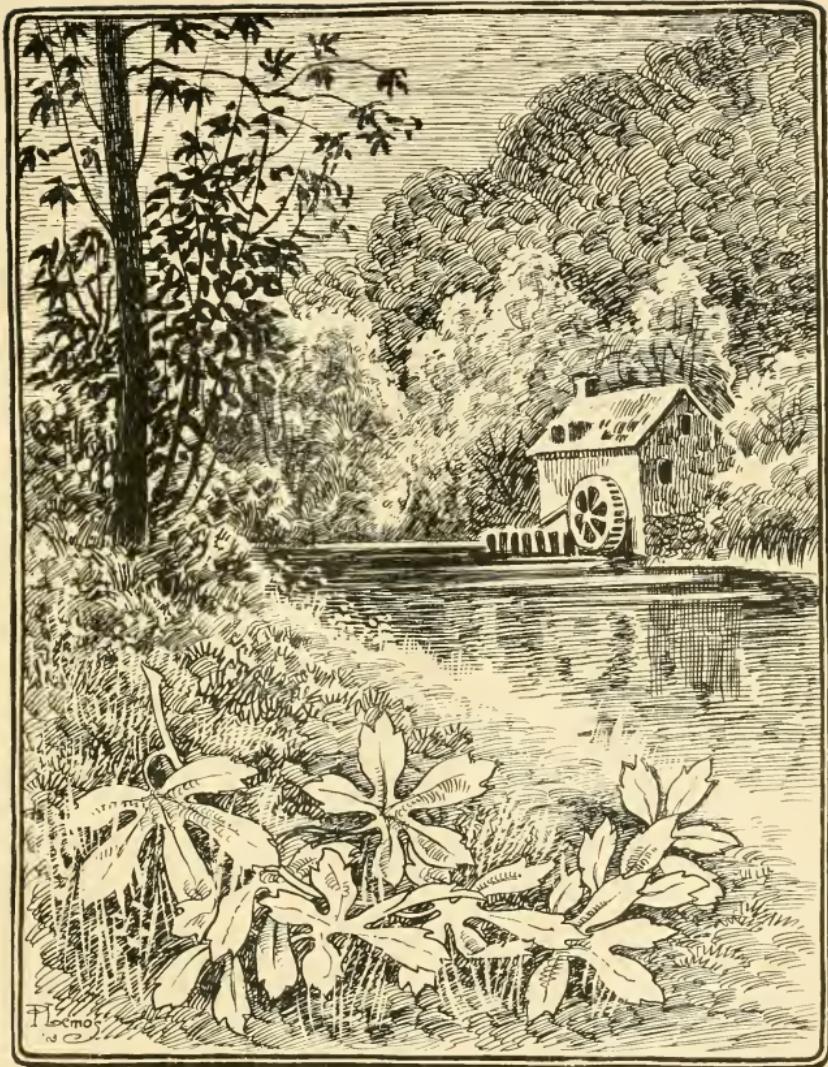
For all the rights of kinship are buried in the grave.

So now I roam the city round, with no abiding-place,  
And drink my wine and lager, to drown my old disgrace;  
For the love for one's own kindred grows wonderfully small  
When he finds that his own picture is turned face toward the wall.

### Maple Leaves

Uncle Sam has sent his postman with a package to my door;  
I wonder what the thing contains, as I quickly glance it o'er;  
It's a most uncommon parcel, with a swelling on its side,  
Like a wart upon the finger, which one vainly tries to hide.

It's wrapped and tied securely with a cord so strong and thick  
I'm sure I can not break it; please bring the scissors quick.  
It's cut, and from its contents falls, all strewn upon the floor,  
Such wondrous tints and colors it has never held before.



“ Ye skirted 'long the river banks, and grew  
upon the hill,  
And waved your beckoning shadows towards  
the old forsaken mill.”

—*Maple Leaves.*

T. L. C.  
13



All amber, brown, and scarlet, and lights of silvery  
sheen,  
With splashes of golden sunshine, all mixed with  
shades of green.  
Here's a magical inscription,—ah! a pass to "long  
ago,"  
And there rises, like a mirage, all the friends I used  
to know.

I see the dense, old forests, with their ever-varying  
shade;  
Ye were their crowning glory, through every dell  
and glade.  
Ye skirted 'long the river banks, and grew upon  
the hill,  
And waved your beckoning shadows towards the old,  
forsaken mill.

Where once, in autumn's afternoon, I found you all  
alone,  
And then and there I claimed you, my love, my very  
own.  
The radiant light of sunset glowed on every shrub  
and tree,  
When you raised your hands and gathered some  
maple leaves for me.

These seem like long-lost treasures from out the  
buried past;

I have their very counterparts locked away, secure  
and fast.

We pledged our troth in silence, 'neath the old  
mill's sheltering eaves,  
But our lives have been as varied as these gorgeous  
maple leaves.

I fancy that these leaflets grew upon that selfsame  
tree,  
Were gathered late by loving hands and forwarded  
to me.

With splashes of brown and amber, just a little light  
and shade,

They live but one brief season, and just as quickly  
fade.

Ah! a love that is inconstant fills the heart with  
bitter pains,

And leaves our lives as checkered as these gorgeous  
maple stains,

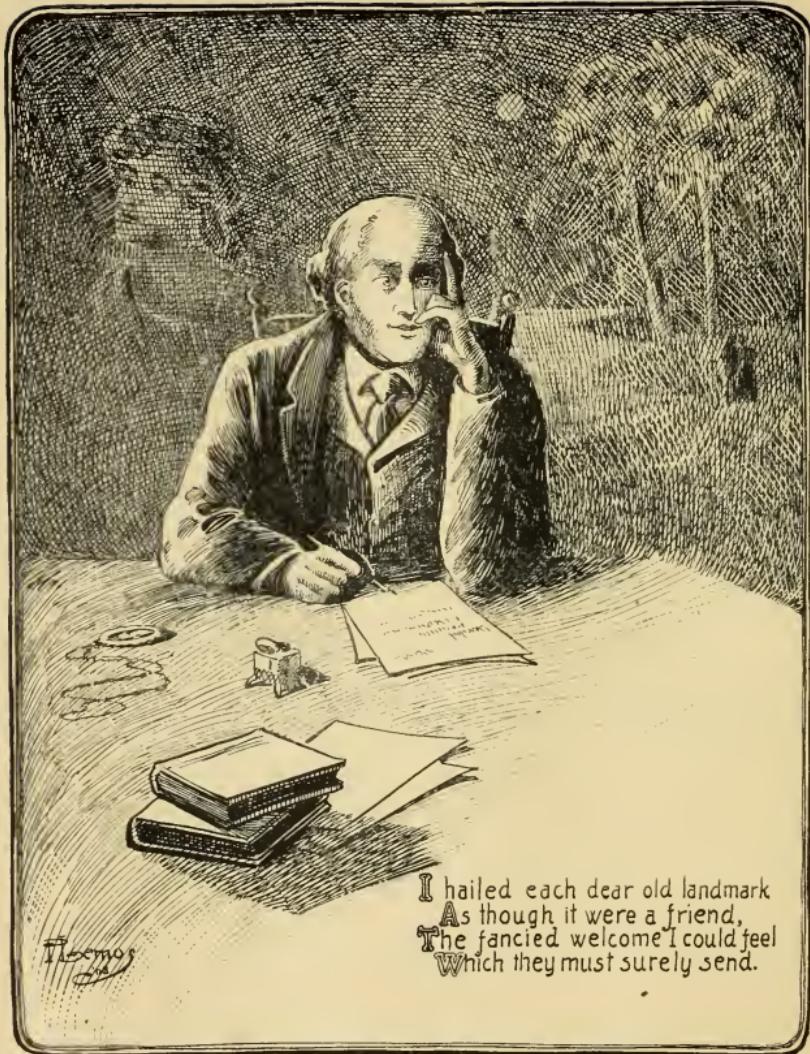
All amber, brown, and scarlet, with a little tint of  
flame,

Which death's frost uses always, wherever he writes  
his name.

A forest without the maple leaves is sombre, dark,  
and chill,

As life without our loved ones is harder and heavier  
still.





I hailed each dear old landmark  
As though it were a friend,  
The fancied welcome I could feel  
Which they must surely send.

So of all the leaves in the forest, through the north,  
the east, and west,  
The gorgeous leaves of the maple I'm sure I love  
the best.

### *A Bachelor's Letter*

Dear Jack, your letter came to hand  
Two months ago or more;  
I have delayed from time to time,  
Now wish the task was o'er.

Should I attempt to answer  
All the queries that you ask,  
'Twould be to you unprofitable,  
To me an arduous task;

So I will answer what I deem  
Is best that you should know,  
And you'll excuse your uncle, Jack,  
This rambling style below.

It's true I am a bachelor,  
And very odd, you say;  
My eyes are losing luster,  
My hair grows thin and gray.

Why thus I choose to journey on  
Through life's uneven way  
Is to yourself a mystery  
Quite unexplained, you say.

We do not choose the pathway  
Which with weary feet we tread,  
But are by a wise Providence  
Through life's great mystery led.

I had my spring-time years ago,  
Of promise rich and rare.  
I wooed and won my Mabel;  
My promised bride was fair.

But I was poor and much too proud  
The toiler's hill to climb,  
And asked my own sweet Mabel  
To wait till wealth was mine.

For rumor told that gold was found  
Upon the western coast,  
Where man could make his fortune  
In two short years, at most.

I said, "I'll seek this promised land  
Filled with its hidden treasure,  
And in all the future years, Mabel,  
Your wish shall be my pleasure."

To-night comes back that dear old scene—  
That last night on the beach.  
How pain and grief at parting  
Saddened the heart of each!

The same sweet moonbeams linger  
O'er ocean, rock, and peak,  
But shadows in the valley  
More slowly seem to creep.

I sit in silence, living o'er  
The deep and mystic spell,  
And o'er me comes an influence,  
From whence I can not tell.

But I am wandering far away  
From my intended track;  
Perhaps, I'm getting tiresome,  
Had better hasten back. . .

I journeyed to the land of gold,  
And reaped a goodly fill;  
But, coming o'er the isthmus home,  
Dame Fortune played me ill.

For weary months I lingered there,  
My hope of life near fled;  
In after years they told me  
They mourned for me as dead.

Oh! the deep, the sad dejection  
I felt upon that day  
When I learned my fortune all had gone  
In some mysterious way.

Then I arose with weary feet  
To retrace the toilsome track,  
For I could not, with all my pride,  
Come empty-handed back.

Thus I worked, I toiled, I delved,  
And, wearied, sought my cot.  
One night I had a strange, wild dream,  
Which I have ne'er forgot.

My mother bended o'er me  
With looks divinely fair,  
A crown of amber lightly lay  
Upon her golden hair.

Her hand upraised a banner;  
These words I plainly read,  
"Poor boy, poor boy," the banner said,  
"You knew not what you sold  
When you exchanged your happiness  
For yellow, shining gold."

I raised to clasp my mother  
And grasp her shining light,  
But she had gone I knew not where,  
So noiseless was her flight.

Here I was seized with wild unrest  
To seek my native shore—  
But, Jack, dear Jack, I can't go on;  
How can I tell you more?

The good ship seemed a laggard  
Upon the surging tide;  
For I was quite impatient  
To meet my waiting bride.

At last we neared the harbor  
That e'er was dear to me,  
"This is my ain, ain countrie,  
This town beside the sea."

I hailed each dear old landmark  
As though it were a friend;  
The fancied welcome I could feel  
Which they must surely send.

They stood like warning sentinels,  
Solemn, unmoved, and fast,  
And told in silent language  
Of a dead and buried past.

Where once grew briar and bramble  
In thick and matted hedge  
The town( now grown a city)  
Came to the water's edge.

The hurrying crowd, the tumult,  
Spoke vividly of change;  
All seemed to be familiar,  
And yet exceeding strange.

Among the throng of strangers  
One dear, familiar face;  
Eagerly I questioned him  
Of people 'bout the place.

But when I asked for Mabel  
His eyes diffused with tears;  
He grasped my hand, and whispered,  
"She's been a wife for years.

"But you're in time to see her,  
And say the last good-by,  
For Mabel's days are numbered,  
And she must surely die."

The scene within her chamber  
I'll draw the curtain o'er,  
And only tell you of her child,  
That played upon the floor.

I've watched her happy childhood,  
Her sweet and artless youth,  
And long before you knew, Jack,  
I had divined the truth.

Your letter held just one surprise  
Which bade me see you wed,  
That was its touch of tenderness  
For old, gray Uncle Ned.

I'll come to see you married,  
And greet your loving wife,  
Wish you both a glad New Year,  
A long and happy life.

And when I come away again.  
If she would know me more,  
Just take my letter down, Jack,  
And read its contents o'er.

Say when I look within her eyes  
I see her mother's face,  
An image dwells within my heart  
Which I would not efface.

And when I'm done with earth life,  
We hope to meet above,  
Where we shall have perfected  
This dream of human love.

## Wishing and Doing

I borrowed the pen of a genius—

In my fingers its language was dumb—  
I besought, I implored of the muses  
To honor my prayer and come.

I asked an exalted position,  
And wished for a high-honored name,  
With joy and peace as companions,  
Then expected the glories of fame.

They laughed as with scorn and derision,  
Till humbly I bowed low my head,  
And pained with anguish and sorrow,  
I grieved o'er my beautiful dead.

They gave me no hope of achievement,  
But showed me that toil was my share,  
And, though humble and low my position,  
The award would equal my care.

This was said, with a grave look of counsel:  
“To the toilers true triumph awaits;  
No wine is ere brought from the vintage  
Till after the crushing of grapes.

“The true, toiling serf and the sailors  
Are equally heroes in strife  
With those in exalted positions,  
The favored and honored in life.”

What is fame?—Alas, but a bubble  
That is swept from your reach by a breath.  
Look down, help the weak and the suffering,  
And smooth out the pillow of death.

The true poet’s soul has felt anguish,  
And suffering has kindled his flame,  
Whose life is privation and sorrow,  
And whose death leaves only a name.

### *Sonnet to Two Old-Maid Milliners*

Poor lonely old maids,  
I desire not your places,  
Your fashions, your follies,  
And all your fine graces.  
You’d gladly exchange  
Both ribbons and laces  
For kisses from lips  
That have beards on their faces.

## How I Danced

I danced with old Squire Merrill  
When I was a little girl.  
It seemed so great an honor  
It set my brain awhirl;  
For I was a farmer's daughter,  
And he was a man of the world.

With fine and courtly manner,  
How well I remember the time!  
His son was giving a party,  
For he was grown a man.  
If I close my eyes this minute,  
I can see just where they stand.

In the parlor of his mansion,  
He and I were to lead the set.  
He said, with a stately deference  
That I never can forget,  
"You have your choice of music,  
If you wish to name this dance."

I answered with an awkward smile,  
A quick and startled glance;  
Said he, "We'll take the Money Musk,  
Just to see how well we feel,  
And if you can't go through it,  
We'll change it to a reel."

With this they struck the music;  
We went whirling in and out.  
When the last long set was ended,  
His son gave a merry shout.  
The squire came quickly forward,  
And led me to a seat,

And said, when bending o'er me,  
"I'm sure we can't be beat,  
So I claim the next cotillion;  
It's my last, last dance to-night."  
I very quickly gave consent,  
For it filled me with delight.

I have since led many cotillions,  
And danced in crowded halls,  
But the dance I danced with the courtly squire  
I'm sure holds over them all.

But time has on kept whirling,  
Sometimes all out of tune;  
We have too long Decembers,  
And all too short a June.

I'm now an old, old woman,  
And the courtly squire is dead,  
Yet in my heart the echo lives  
Of the kindly words he said.

## The Fiddle

Last night I heard the fiddle,  
As it creaked beneath the bow,  
And brought to life the same old tunes  
I danced by years ago.

Ah! how he thumbed that fiddle,  
Till it set my brain awhirl!  
And time rolled backward, till again  
I seemed a thoughtless girl.

The room grew old and rustic,  
With its low and blackened walls,  
And I heard the tripping footsteps  
With the music rise and fall.

And when he went to calling  
All those figures to and fro,  
I seemed to see the very boys  
And girls I used to know.

The Fisher's Hornpipe, Money Musk,  
I asked him to repeat;  
For it brought an awful tickling  
To the bottoms of my feet.

So when I hear a fiddle,  
    You would hardly think 'tis me,  
To see me up and dancing,  
    When I own to sixty-three.

### Can One Be Robbed?

Can one be robbed of what he ne'er possessed?  
I answer, "Yes," to my unquiet quest;  
Who's orphaned at his birth is robbed of love,  
And misses it as nestlings miss the dove.

Or an unwelcome child, who comes to earth,  
Is robbed of love long ere he has his birth,  
And finds life's road a lone and dreary way,  
For which the gift of life can scarcely pay.

Unwilling hands may soothe his infant breast;  
He'll miss the love that prompts the fond caress.  
Unjustly robbed; Oh! dearth of childhood's years;  
Oh! bitter stings and sobbing heart-felt tears!

Ye wives who eschewed love and married dross,  
Must pay the price, your children suffer loss.  
Who's crippled at his birth, or mute, or blind,  
May feel his nature's God, at times, unkind;

But greater is the loss of love than sense  
To sensitive hearts; alas! far more intense.  
Eternally the curse must follow sin,  
As love with happiness remain a twin.

But let us hope that time will compensate,  
And living prove a long progressive state;  
That the vast future of evolving years  
Will prove that smiles can take the place of tears.

### Dreaming

In flush of youth, when hopes are high,  
Ere clouds obscure the morning sky,  
With sturdy feet and buoyant tread,  
Our young lives by ambition fed,

We roam the hills or search the plains,  
Fully assured of worldly gains,  
And only ask that time may fly;  
For we will sure old care defy.

The future, wreathed in sunny smiles,  
With witchery the time beguiles.  
Oh, blessed days of only seeming!  
Oh, golden years of midday dreaming!

What possibilities we conceived!  
What wondrous things we each believed!  
Phantoms they proved with fleeting youth;  
Your love remains a living truth.

Of all life's joys I e'er shall know,  
This follows me where'er I go,  
And comes again, forever new,  
Fresh as the flowers with morning dew.

I sometimes mourn o'er dreary ways,  
Till memory brings those blissful days;  
Then living only is a seeming,  
And I am happy in my dreaming.

### My Vision

In sadness I murmured all through the long day,  
And grieved that my darling was taken away.  
I asked, almost wildly, "Why could he not stay  
To cheer and to brighten my wearisome way?"

And thus through the long day I murmured and  
wept,  
Till nature, o'erwearied, gave way, and I slept.  
Then came to my vision a beautiful scene;  
The site was a landscape that bordered a stream.

But out on the landscape confusion was spread,—  
The lives of the living, the graves of the dead;  
Helpless infants were there, with wild, wailing cries;  
The feeble, the aged, I heard their deep sighs.

And eager youths grasped at the foam of the tide,  
Unheeding the chasm that yawned at their side;  
While men much too early for old father Time  
Came, bowed down by sorrow, by care, or by crime.

And pale, wasted women, o'erburdened by care,  
Each jostled the other—the throng was all there.  
“This scene of confusion, of bustle and strife,  
Is earth’s panorama and journey of life.”

Thus sung a sweet voice, seeming close at my side;  
I searched, and soon found it came over the tide.  
And thus as I wondered and waited to see,  
The minstrel arose, and came over to me.

The face of an angel could not be more fair;  
That calm, holy look no mortal could wear.  
I knew that my darling had come to me now,  
With the heaven-born peace beaming forth from his  
brow.

Smiling sweetly, he said, “Now look at your child;  
Can you wish I were back on the landscape wild?”

I gazed at the vision, so fair and so mild,  
And answered, "No, darling; oh! no, my sweet child."

"Oh! now, my dear mother, when I float away,  
Remember I came here to brighten your stay."  
Thus saying, the dear one glided over the stream,  
But long could I trace there a lingering gleam.

Oh! may the gleam brighten this sad life of mine,  
And strengthen me on through the journey of time.  
Then came this sweet message, just wafted to me,  
"Remember your blindness; God only can see."

### The Childless Mother

Well may a childless mother weep,  
With sobs of anguish, low and deep,  
When death calls all her loved ones home,  
And leaves her here, indeed alone.

Oh! stricken heart, so blindly led,  
So vainly seeking beauteous dead,  
Is there no helper? there no God?  
No light beyond this senseless sod?

No balm or cure for human woe,  
Oh, where can human reason go?  
Death has, at least, one deathless charm,—  
They've passed beyond all mortal harm.

And never more they'll feel the woe  
Of erring, weak ones here below.  
Oh! think of those condemned through time,  
Or linked with those all steeped in crime.

'Twere easier far to let them go,  
Than see them plodding thus below.  
Though childless, who would call them back,  
And see them bound to torture's rack?

Or sunken to the depths of shame,  
Of wearing here a blighted name?  
Oh! who would court the cruel fate  
Of seeing love all turn to hate?

For death is not the worst of ills;  
It never once affection kills.  
Why question, with our human sight,  
The wisdom of the Infinite;  
Or dare to lengthen out the span  
That is allotted here to man?

## Grief

The sky is all shadowed, all nature's in gloom,  
The silence of midnight pervades my low room;  
I hear the soft wind as it sighs through the dell,  
With a cadence of grief which words can not tell.  
It breathes through my soul a refrain like its own,  
While from my pale lips escapes a low moan.

For my poor heart, o'ercharged, having long sought  
relief,  
Has fled for one hour to indulge in its grief.  
I've battled it long, long begged it desist,  
But it comes with a power I can not resist;  
It has beat down the barriers I builded so high,  
And the guards at the portals now prostrated lie.

Hope is crushed, joy dead, and my soul draped in  
gloom;  
But no one must know that my heart holds a tomb;  
For they must arise, like a Phoenix, at dawn,  
Their semblance, at least, o'er the sepulcher drawn.  
'Tis vain, though at present I bid it be still;  
It sets at defiance my governing will.

And I sit here in tears, as if weeping had power  
To wash away blighting and bring back the flowers.  
The few that bloomed bright in the pathway I trod  
Are gathered long since in the gardens of God.

'Tis well that the sky is o'ershadowed and gray;  
I'd rather have shadows than sunshine to-day;

For ungenial glitter its keen arrows sends,  
Like gazes of strangers at funerals of friends.  
I fancy that nature, with sobbing and tears,  
Has wept with her children these numberless years;  
And undefined sympathy seems trailing therein,  
As the curse followed swift in the footsteps of sin.

In hours such as these, grant power from above,  
Dispel the dark clouds with undying love;  
Oh! raise up the spirit to communion with Thee,  
For, Father, the burden seems heavy to me.  
I murmur, alas! at our dim human sight,  
While humbly I bow to acknowledge Thy might.

### Sonnet for a Young Lady's Album

When the fingers of Time  
    Turn the pages of life  
With rapid, changing fleetness,  
    May you gather from its pages, rife,  
The treasures of its completeness.

## Questioning

When pain clings so closely that question we must,  
Is dying all death? must we pass into dust?  
When earth's light grows dim, and the pulse ebbs  
away,  
Will nothing be left but cold, passionless clay?

Oh, that something beyond would its radiance lend,  
Assuring poor mortals the grave's not the end!  
These shadows of darkness relentlessly fall;  
Each moment of time brings the deep sable pall,

Till all of earth's children are powerless to save,  
And cry, "Hath Almighty a power o'er the grave?"  
All restlessly seeking the one hidden goal,  
All question alike the life of the soul.

The whispers are borne on the unanswering breeze,  
Reverberating ever are questions like these:  
"Shall I pass forever from under the rod?  
My soul feel forever the sunshine of God?

"Will the dear long departed come close to the shore,  
And smile a glad welcome, and beckon me o'er?  
Will the spirit, untrammeled, delight in its power,  
Unfold with new beauty, like germs of a flower?

“When friends that have loved me through sunshine  
and gloom

Are gathered around in the death-shaded room,  
Will the spirit of mercy come down in its might,  
And bear me aloft on its pinions of light?

“Or will life, with its cares, its ceaseless commotion,  
Close over my grave, like the waves of the ocean,  
Till the limitless future and far-reaching past,  
Together, relentless, are swept from my grasp?”

Doubt whispers, “It may be.” It may be; and yet  
I’d not be forgotten; I would not forget.  
Oh! Father, dear Father, give light from above,  
Assuring poor mortals of infinite love.

### *There Is No Death*

“The old, deserted mansion, built of clay,  
Is silent now, and ready to be borne away.”

Thus mourned the dear ones, as, with softened tread,  
They came to look once more upon the silent dead.

“Oh! ruthless, unrelenting death,” they cried,  
“Thou hast our all, yet ne’er art satisfied.  
Why make them stark and dumb? they can not hear,  
Or feel our touch, or know when we are near.

Oh! pitiless, Oh! cruel death," they cried,  
"Is there no life, no light, upon the other side?"

\* \* \* \* \*

By accident I lost the subtle power of breath,  
And passed into that state which mortals here call  
death.

There was for me no struggle, no sickening sight,  
For death had come, as one snuffs out a light;  
Though dread, incomprehensible is death in any  
light,  
Beside decrepit helplessness 'tis a far more beauteous  
sight.

Of every mortal sense I was bereft,  
And yet far greater powers than all I now pos-  
sessed,—  
Sweet, sacred gift we miscall intuition;  
It's only truly learned on the border-land transition.

No finite mind can comprehend, or hope to under-  
stand,  
The beauties of immortal life within the spirit-land,  
As by power of single thought I glided o'er land and  
sea,  
Although the power of human touch had gone far,  
far from me.

Soft as the summer sunlight falls upon the waters,  
Or the love of human mothers for their daughters,  
Or grateful sleep falls o'er the wearied senses,  
Thus came the greater gifts which death alone dispenses.

We know no more of discord; that is left with mortal clay;

And the presence of our loved ones brightens all our heavenly way.

### Thine Eyes

Thine eyes are ever fond and tender,  
With love-light so trusting and true,  
Outvying the stars in their splendor,  
More radiant than morn's sparkling dew.

Chorus—

I own their full power to enthrall me;  
You may smile, you may fret, or may sigh,  
If e'er I acknowledge I'm vanquished,  
'Twill be by the light of your eye.

Oh! they hold more than depth of the ocean,  
By having full power to impart  
The silent, but living emotions  
That stir in the realm of your heart.

Chorus—

When troubled, they follow through daylight,  
With restless, unspeakable woe,  
Invading the silence of midnight,  
And haunting me where'er I go.

Chorus—

When joyous and hopeful and happy,  
Their magical powers give delight,  
Till the boys about town say I'm sappy,  
I'm longing so much for their sight.

Chorus—

### *Moving Pictures*

If I could paint upon the air,  
I'd show you scenes, both dark and fair.  
The first should be a country scene,  
Of children sporting on the green.

You'd almost hear their shouts of glee,  
I'd bring them out so forcibly;  
You'd see their kites all flying high,  
And larger boys should play "I spy."

Some girl should dance as May-day queen,  
As happy as a midday dream.  
These lovely sights would youth renew,  
While older eyes these scenes review.

I'd change the scene, and quickly then  
Would take you to the pauper's den;  
Such miseries I would portray,  
You'd quickly turn the other way.

But it would surely move your heart,  
Cause tears to eyelids softly start,  
To see these suffering ones of earth,  
Demented from their very birth.

From such a scene in sorry plight,  
You'd calmly view a broad street fight;  
But you would gladly come with me  
To happier homes of harmony,

There to behold the loving wife,  
The center of an honored life,  
Who, with noble husband, proud and grand,  
In loving words gives each command.

Here happy children kindly meet,  
And gladly all their joys repeat.  
Then, just for contrast, I'd unfold  
The habitation of a scold,

Whose nodding head and shaking fist,  
And words made strong with emphasis,  
Have kept in practice from a girl,  
And turned her husband to a churl.

She still insists it is his dues,  
And gives her good man fits of blues;  
Her children rise and run away,  
And longer we'll not wish to stay.

Sure, 'tis a picture in which no art  
Can bring to view the saddest part.  
Then, as kaleidoscopes will turn,  
I'll take you where the camp-fires burn,

And show you soldiers as they stand,  
Their drilling and their marching grand;  
You'd see each column move along,  
Like measures of a written song;

You'd see them wheel from left to right.  
Oh! is not this a stirring sight?  
Just see their glittering uniforms,  
Which well their persons doth adorn!

From canteens now they sip their drams,  
But all their battles shall be shams;  
And after all this show and play,  
You'd see them come and draw their pay.

You'd see their quick and buoyant tread,  
And almost hear what each man said.  
I'd paint this scene so very fair  
No other picture could compare.

For I would put far, far away  
The pallet where the wounded lay;  
So while you looked you'd understand  
That man had learned this great command:

That evermore all strife be stilled,  
And nevermore shall man be killed;  
And the picture be like a passing play,  
From which you'd tire and turn away.

And turning, could not fail to see  
The triumph of the toiling free;  
For here behold where want is dead  
And starving multitudes are fed.

Oh! is not this a grander sight  
Than ever canvas brought to light?  
If I could well this scene portray,  
Its memory would live on for aye.

Then would I paint the morning light  
As it dispels the darksome night;  
A lovely scene I'd bring to view,  
And, best of all, it should be true.

You'd hear the murmuring streamlet flow,  
For I would trace it to and fro  
With such marvelous gift of tracery  
That he who looked would, wondering, see,

Whatever country he doth own,  
The nearest brook to childhood's home.  
Its witchery would bid age retreat,  
And old-time joys would all repeat.

Then, close beside the murmuring stream,  
He'd list again to love's sweet dream;  
He'd see the maid and lover meet,  
And hear their voices, low and sweet;

He'd catch the gleam of loving eye,  
And waking say, "Oh! one was I."  
Thus, as I'd paint, you would behold,  
And proclaim me an artist bold;

For these sweet pictures, all in one,  
Would show what wonders love has done,  
And teach us all to love the more,  
While toilsome days are passing o'er.

And then for chidings look to self,  
For little faults creep in by stealth,  
Through all the journeyings and strife  
Of every human being's life.

Where now are groupings dark as night  
There should be scenes of beauteous light.  
Which, like Jacob's ladder built in cloud,  
Speak to the inner sense aloud;

Giving to all a keen delight,  
While teaching us to live aright.  
Love is the choicest gift of earth,  
The only treasure of priceless worth.

### The Open Well

I've been out to grandpa's, and all through the  
hay-mows;  
I've searched through the low eaves, where the  
barn swallows dwell;  
I've romped through the meadow and down through  
the wild-wood;  
And heard all the stories that Aunt Hannah tells.

I asked if she knew 'bout that "old, oaken bucket,"  
The "iron-bound bucket," that once hung in the  
well.

She said, "'Tis the sweetest, the dearest old story  
That ever with music from human lips fell;  
But there is a shade which the painter and poet,  
If he were a woman, he surely would tell,  
Though it might mar the picture, and thus spoil the  
music,—  
He'd speak of the faults of that old, open well.

He'd tell how old puss and her kittens got drowned  
('Twas quite unbeknown to us for a spell,  
Till the water grew foul, and we thought it was  
poisoned;  
'Twas not fit to be used, we found out by the  
smell).

Then we fussed and we fumed for these modern im-  
provements,

And called it hard labor to draw from the well  
With "the old, oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,  
The moss-covered bucket, that hung in the well."

When alone one must cook and brew for the work-  
men,

Do out the week's washing for the household, as  
well,

Then wait on the door-bell, and tend to the baby  
(I've done it myself, and I surely can tell).

There is not much to sigh for, not very much in it,  
This drawing the water from out the old well;  
For overwrought muscles bring painful emotions,  
And mar the beauty of which poets can tell.

If the bucket still swung at the well, you would  
pass it,

And drink of the water that runs through the faucet;  
You'd mourn not, nor sigh, for the days that are olden,  
But rather would own that the present is golden.

Yet all do agree 'tis the sweetest old story  
That ever with music from human lips fell,  
'Bout that "old, oaken bucket, the iron-bound  
bucket,  
The moss-covered bucket, that hung in the well."

### The Statue of Memory

In each heart is a secret chamber  
Where the statue of Memory stands,  
On which golden letters are burnished  
And wrought by tireless hands.

All woven around are inscriptions,  
In varying light and shade,  
Of daring, delightful achievements,  
Deep cuts of our blunderings made.

Here Cupid brings garlands of roses,  
To embellish the neck of a dove;  
Joy and Innocence (sweetest of cherubs)  
Have enshrined it the symbol of love.

With secret and untiring labor,  
Which time can never efface,  
So fine and intricately woven  
That only your vision can trace,

Hope modestly brings some bright links  
For the beak of this beautiful bird,  
And smiles o'er her unfinished labor  
With each low and sweet-whispered word.

How royally regal her person!  
How brilliant and sparkling her eye!  
She faithfully toils on with patience,  
Though toils, alas! with a sigh.

Faith works more slowly, till weary  
She tries many wonderful arts,  
Quite often dissembling unwisely,  
And blindly concealing some parts,

Till Sorrow and Anger together  
Arise and put out the bird's eyes.  
She opens her beak in her anguish,  
With wild and low, plaintive cries.

Those beautiful links now are worthless,  
All scattered and broken in twain;  
And Despair comes, creeping in slowly,  
And looks in her eyes for the pain.

Joy wrathfully scans the deep injury,  
Faith murmurs a hasty good-by,  
Then seeking the dove in her anguish,  
Together they suffer and die.

We smile while we carry their coffins—  
The world is what we most dread—  
And the statue of Memory grows heavy  
With beautiful, unburied dead.

## California

Read at the Breaking of the Ground for the Midwinter  
Fair Held in San Francisco, Cal., in 1894

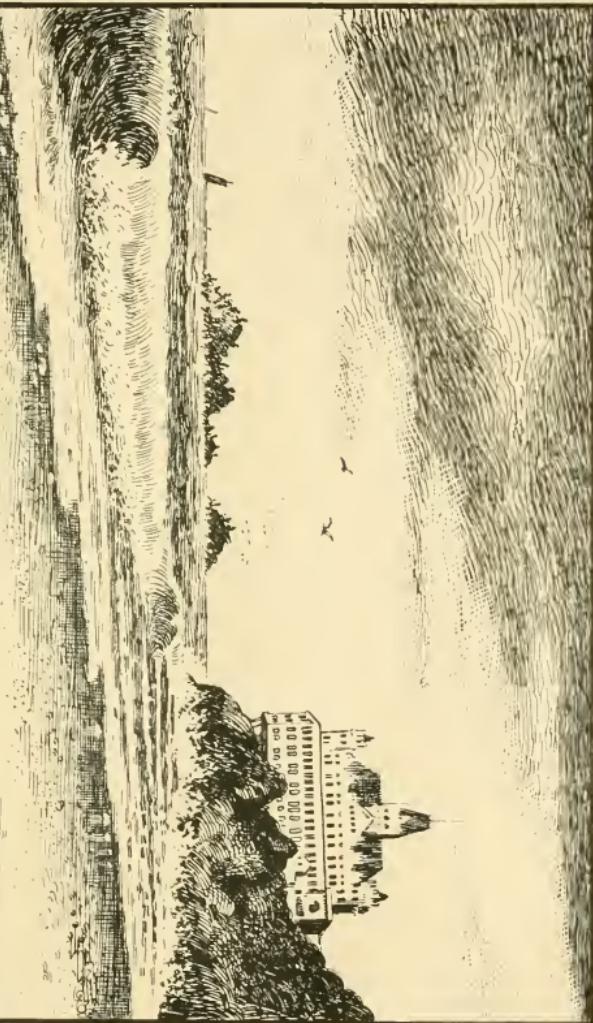
California, bright gem by the ocean,  
Grand laurels are ever for thee,  
To bear to the courts of all nations,  
Like splendor of sunset to sea.

Your achievements are watched from all quarters.  
And welcomed with joy and surprise;  
The people look up to your statesmen  
For counsel and words of the wise.

Your statesmen are noble and polished,  
Your women are fair and refined,  
And branches of olives grow sturdy,  
With sparklingly-brilliant young minds.

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Cliff House and Seal Rocks



C A L I F O R N I A



Your laborers all have abundance,  
And know not extreme heat or cold;  
They are blessed with a large sense of comfort,  
Far better than silver or gold.

When we cross the Sierras at midnight,  
We lose the old secular year,  
And never again find December,  
October, and June make our year.

The name Golden Gate seems befitting  
A harbor so tranquil and fair,  
To a land filled with tropical wonders;  
A wish half expressed and 'tis there.

Your beauty and grandeur surpasses  
The power of all language to tell,  
Enchanting, delighting, bewitching,  
As with a magical spell.

Your vast sources of wealth are unnumbered,  
And as little dreamed, it may be,  
As the mariner sailing the ocean  
Little guesses the depth of the sea.

Rich minerals poured into your treasury  
Till the world looked on quite amazed;  
All languages mixed in the Babel  
When sounding a chorus of praise.

Then flocked from all climes and all countries  
    The sturdy, the valiant, and true;  
While under your banner of freedom  
    Our forefathers' precepts renew.

Let your sons and your daughters accomplish  
    High, moral, and unselfish deeds,  
Till unborn generations shall gather  
    Rich fruits from your sowing of seeds.

Don't sigh o'er the days that have vanished,  
    Nor mourn for the heroes all dead,  
But point to the men by whose labor  
    The suffering nations are fed.

Then cut the deep valleys and hillsides  
    Into homes for the toiling free,  
Till the air reverberates with music  
    From a chorus of state jubilee.

Then hail ye, All honor to Labor,  
    With Capital close by its side.  
Let "Peace" be forever your watchword,  
    "California," forever your pride.

## Ode for the Opening Exercises of the Midwinter Fair

*(Held in San Francisco, 1894)*

Oh! welcome, thrice welcome, to this “City of  
Palms,”

Where nature has lavished such bountiful charms.  
Unfurl wide the banners, open gateway and door,  
To welcome with honor eighteen-ninety-four.

A centennial century, stark on its bier,  
Has vanished forever; its triumphs are here;  
While long strides of progress, from stage on to  
stage,  
Have brought us triumphant this magical age.

Two can talk through a telephone just for two bits,  
Till one or the other has exhausted his wits.  
They do away space with the telegraph wire,  
By sending a message where'er they desire.

Oh! one can not mention the numerous ways,  
But who would e'er sigh for his grandfather's days?  
The crown of all blessings is peace and good-will;  
A dead, stagnant peace, isn't down on the bill.

But born of high purpose and power to achieve,  
What can hands not accomplish that heads can  
conceive?

Though skeptics all said it was written on air;  
We never should witness this Midwinter Fair.

But, thanks to all those who have worked with their  
wills,  
And thanks to the heroes who tapped their own  
tills,  
'Tis the marvel of marvels to civilized nations;  
Its like's not been known since the world's first  
creation.  
So to time and these people, the rich, great, and  
small,  
With pleasure and honor we welcome you all.  
Where this Midwinter Fair and its praises are sung,  
May you hear through its chorus the name of "De  
Young."

### To the Native Daughters

California's fair daughters, I bow to your shrine;  
Accept with indulgence this tribute of mine,  
Most favored of all upon this round earth,  
To claim this fair state as the land of your birth.

Rare tropical fruits in abundance are here;  
Sweet-scented roses bloom all through the year.  
And where choice fruits of nature profusely abound,  
The loveliest women are sure to be found.

You were cradled in comfort, shielded from harm;  
While witchery wove each such magical charm  
That kings are not honored more proudly than he,  
In being a parent to daughters like thee.

You were nurtured with culture, were guarded with  
care;  
While nature has lavished a bountiful share,—  
With charms has bedecked you, so grandly complete,  
From the crowns of your heads to the soles of your  
feet,

That I ask here in wonder, “Where under the sun  
Will you find fitting mates with the proud native  
sons?”

Any man of high honor who looks for his peer  
Must acknowledge at once he finds she is here.

Far above rubies, rare diamonds, and pearls,  
The wealth of our lives is the smiles of our girls.

### *A Tribute to Ceres*

Dear Ceres, fair goddess of produce and corn,  
Your scepter has ruled since creation’s first morn,  
With power more despotic than tyrant’s or king’s.  
Your frown on an empire keen suffering brings;

No station on earth is exempt from your scorn,  
And subjects pay tribute as quickly as born.

“Willing tribute forever and ever,” they cry.  
While centuries roll on, then languish and die,  
You reign on in triumph when their courses are run,  
As regally fair as first kissed by the sun.  
Fair Flora, sweet goddess in gorgeous array,  
Outshines you in beauty a brief, happy day,

Till Time gets enamored, the blundering old churl,  
Like a man past his prime with a sweet, laughing  
girl.

Soon faded and worn, she then seeks your aid,  
When you and Pomona both comfort the maid.  
Then Pomona holds carnival a part of each year,  
But she, too, would perish if you were not near.

Endowed by the Deity, 'tis yours to command;  
You nurture all life when you smile o'er the land,  
So while these fair goddesses visit our earth,  
Your constancy proves your superior worth.

## Toast to Pomona

To all the fair Pomonas throughout this golden state,  
You ask me here to give a toast, and so I bow to fate.

\* \* \* \* \*

To all the fair Pomonas throughout this sunny land,  
Who wield the magic scepter with a fair and lavish  
hand,  
No matter what the multitude, or when they dine,  
or where,  
She'll give you all a love-feast, by taking it in  
pears (pairs).

\* \* \* \* \*

There! I knew I could not make a toast; it is  
scorched or underdone,  
And just turns out (I knew it would) a very simple  
pun.

## Truthfulness

*(Written for a small boy)*

You can guess at my age  
When you look at my size,  
But for tracing the truth  
You must look in my eyes.

I dwell in two kingdoms,  
Whose division between  
Is formed by the feelings,  
And hard to be seen.

It is a hard matter  
To keep them apart,  
They're being united  
So close to my heart.

While one is called "Evil,"  
And one is called "Good,"  
I stayed in the better  
All through babyhood.

Once, when I grew older,  
I told wicked lies.  
Up came a good fairy  
And winked through my eyes.

Then mama looked down  
Through my tears, and saw  
How wicked I was  
In breaking God's law;

Then told me how badly  
She suffered beside,  
Then opened her arms,  
And together we cried.

I resolved at that moment  
To become a good man,  
To tell the whole truth;  
And I know that I can.

### Courage

You ask if I have courage;  
That I must wait to see;  
If one must fight to prove it,  
You need not count on me.

If one must run to danger  
To show that he is brave,  
I think the better action  
Is my precious self to save.

But if my little playmates  
Ask me to act or tell a lie,  
It takes a bit of courage  
Their wishes to deny.

Folks used to think the hoe and plow  
Developed muscle for the fool;  
When one had wit and courage,  
The sword or musket was the tool.

The times are always changing,  
    Yet courage is ever the same;  
But many a fainting hero dies,  
    And the world knows not his name.

When the poor and weak and helpless  
    Are abused within my sight,  
There comes a time for action,  
    And I'm brave enough to fight.

### Grandpa's Glasses

I donned my grandpa's glasses when I was a little  
    child,  
And peered above their golden rims. Ah! how my  
    mother smiled  
When gently she removed them! I can hear just  
    what she said:  
“They are much too wise for little eyes and such a  
    curly head.”

I put them on again at ten, with jacket and top  
    boots,  
And thought myself a little man; the rest were silly  
    coots.  
I looked above the rims again, and saw my mother  
    frown,  
While sternly she commanded me to lay those glasses  
    down.

I tried them on at twenty; looked above, beneath,  
and through,  
And thought the world enchanting, with nothing  
much to do.  
But mother said, "Don't loiter round; there's work,  
as well as play;  
So just get in and rustle; it's much the better way."

I tried them on at thirty; everything was in a whirl,  
For everywhere, where'er I looked, I saw some pretty  
girl.

I looked no more for mother's face; it had vanished  
from my sight,  
And I could never see it more, except in dreams of  
night.

I put them on at forty; things were mixed and truly  
strange;

I just began to realize how much of life is change.  
I put them on, I took them off, was never quite con-  
tent,  
So much of toil, so much of loss, so much of life  
misspent.

I press them on at fifty; everything looks very plain,  
And life seems full and pleasing, as I live it o'er  
again.

If I should live till sixty—it's not so very far—  
I'll put on these old glasses, and look like my own  
grandpa.

## Discontent

My tasks were most distasteful;  
I murmured as I toiled,  
And through careless inattention  
Many were the things I spoiled.

I looked on other's triumphs,  
Thinking they were easy found;  
While low and menial labor  
Held me in its ceaseless round.

I longed for more of pleasure,  
I sighed for more of books,  
And despised the man above ground  
Who first invented cooks.

I was assailed, both night and morning,  
By a noisy, hungry crowd,  
Who shouted forth my praises  
In chorus long and loud.

But this I took for granted,  
As every toiler's part;  
For none had ever dared to class  
Fine cooking as an art.

It was thought to be essential,  
And an every-day affair,  
And every household mother  
Found her full, allotted share.

But I have learned my lesson;  
Suffering teaches more than books;  
The most exalted labor  
Is done by household cooks.

Let every toiling mother learn,  
While there's empty mouths to fill,  
To do her work with pleasure,  
Ere by death their lips are stilled.

### *Taught by the Fairies*

Wearied and worn, and at war with fate,  
I sank to rest in a wretched state;  
For the day had passed with toil and pain,  
For coveted blessings I could not gain.  
“Why must I toil and never attain?”  
I fretfully murmured again and again.

Baffled and hedged at every turn,  
My heart with indignation burned.  
Why was I born this helpless thing,  
When even a bird has its strength of wing,

Can fly unfettered from shore to shore?  
Oh! what do we know of the evermore?

Thus, worn and weary, I sank in sleep,  
Where a better power may its vigil keep;  
And I was borne by a fitful dream  
Along the banks of a turbulent stream,  
Till it broadened out o'er a vast expanse,  
Where the soft sea waves in the sunshine danced.

There, wildly tossed on the seething waves,  
Were wretched things from their unknown graves;  
But sprites and fairies would gather the things,  
And quickly transform them to beautiful rings,  
Or sheaves of wheat, or garlands bright,  
Or harps of gold, with strange, new light.

I felt their meaning, though I heard no tone,  
"Go gather the things, and weave your own."  
"I can gather the wretched things," I said,  
"But in my fingers they all seem dead."  
"Work with a will; there is a power  
That will come to you in every hour.  
But watch and work and seek perfection,  
For many a piece will need correction."  
They left me there, within the reach  
Of all those shreds upon the beach.  
So now I work, with joy I sing,  
Content and happy, for time must bring

The coveted blessings I shall attain,  
And love and triumph with me remain.  
So when my heart makes bitter moan,  
Or, sad and lonely, I walk alone,  
My fancy goes to that unknown sea,  
And I review the lesson the fairies taught me.

### Pledge to the Three Graces

By each golden circle we pledge to the last  
A friendship that's precious, enduring, and fast;  
So fill up the bumper, and drink while we may,  
For life's golden moments are gliding away.

Aye, faith, hope, and charity, each shall have one.  
While journeying on toward the far-setting sun;  
So fill up the bumper, and drink with good cheer;  
The night waneth fast, soon morning is here.

Hip, hurrah! just one bumper we'll drink ere we  
part,—  
The drink, fitting emblem and wish of each heart.  
May our lives be as happy, as full, as complete,  
Our friendship as strong, and our union as sweet.

## Words on Reading the Lines

“Sorrow’s crown of sorrow is  
Remembering happier things.”  
—Tennyson.

Into whose lives have come happy things,  
Remembrance sweet joy perpetually brings.  
Beyond measure blessed, thrice happy are they,  
Though clouds may o’ershadow on life’s rugged way.

Oh, thus but to live for one brief, happy hour  
Increases our faith in Omnipotent Power;  
Nor can grief or pain bring back the sad dearth  
Of which we were conscious ere joy had its birth.  
Though stricken and dead, brief its bright stay;  
Resplendent in beauty, it lived for a day.  
While suffering loss, if still conscious of gain,  
’Twill help us endure and triumph in pain.

Murmuring, learn we the lessons of life;  
Great joys and great sorrows ever run rife.  
Blindly we question the wisdom of God  
When we are commanded, “Pass under the rod.”

## The Secret Chamber

Each heart holds its secret chamber  
Where the statue of Memory stands,  
All written with varied inscriptions  
With a fine, but indelible, hand.

Joy starts with a grand little flourish,  
Unheeding where'er he will end,  
When Care gives a jolt, and he loses  
The beauty and grace he has penned.

Hope climbs to place her inscription  
Well above and in front of the rest;  
But stumbles and falls, while protesting  
Her motives are surely the best.

Faith blindly works, slowly achieving  
A beauteous, bright, shining spot,  
And insists 'tis the greatest of virtues  
The helpers of mortals have wrought.

Love follows along in her footsteps,  
And toils with such magical art  
That she weaves a glittering circle  
Which embellishes every part.

Hate, Envy, and Malice, the trio,  
Oft toiling with such eager zest,  
Assisted at odd times by Folly,  
Soon mar all achieved by the rest.

Grief mourns o'er the wrecks with sad anguish;  
She cuts deep into the gloss,  
And declares, while reviewing her labor,  
"Alas! alas! it's all dross."

But Duty and Patience are plodding  
In a dark, little niche of their own,  
Where they add to the work done by Pleasure,  
As shades to a picture give tone.

Each moment is wrought some inscription,  
Though silent and all out of sight.  
Oh! happy the days which in passing  
Are reviewed with keen pleasure at night.

## The Marrying Widow

The following piece needs a few words of explanation. It was written in answer to a granger advertising in the grange that he wanted a wife, and was not particular as to who she was, as his affections were so scattered, and any lady in the grange was good enough. It reminded me of a man who wanted to purchase a barrel of apples, and said apples were apples; any of them were good enough. But when offered russets, said they were good keepers, but he did not like the kind. The next offered were Smith's ciders, and they were too sour; then the maiden blush. "Oh, yes," he said, "they are a nice looking apple, but are apt to be rotten at the core." So I wrote the following:—

I sat by the fire in the dim, fading light,  
And thought of that poor, lonely granger's sad  
plight,  
How he wants a young wife, not a chit of a girl,  
Who'd spend all her time to keep her front hair in  
curl.

He wants Miss Perfection, that's plain as can be;  
And just come to think, she's most exactly like me.  
This staggered me some, and I sat quite a spell.  
"He may be too young, yet you never can tell."

For look through the world, on its vast population,  
You'll see every age in the marriage relation,  
Till people might say, "There's a man and his  
mother,"

Or, "There's an old lady and her younger brother."  
So, if his scattered affections should center on me,  
I'm as marrying a widow as he'll likely see.

I'm promised by contract to one, two, or three.  
You wonder to whom—well, I'll tell you, maybe.  
"Then why don't I marry?" Ah! there comes the  
rub;

Some dear, bright-eyed woman calls each man her  
hub.

Of course, they all say they were led to the altar  
Before they saw me, or their footsteps would falter.

You ask any granger, he will say 'tisn't he;  
But if he were a widower, you'd see what you'd see.  
If the man is past middle age, that's all the better;  
He'll want a new wife just to humor and pet her.  
So, if his scattered affections should center on me,  
I'm as marrying a widow as he'll likely see.

So I move and amend, without the first flaw,  
A matrimonial bureau become a grange law.  
Ah! I hear that low whisper, "'Tis a good notion."

Don't all rise at once just to "second the motion,"  
For if this said bureau should become a grange law,  
Then every young lady would invest in a draw.

And all married members would call it intrusion;  
That would take up the time, and all end in con-  
fusion.

So I'll done with my nonsense ere you rate me a  
dunce,

And order my trousseau completed at once,  
For, if his scattered affections should center on me,  
I'm as marrying a widow as he'll likely see.

### Woman's Rights

So much is talked of nowadays  
Of woman's rights and wrongs,  
And studied on the problem  
Of what to her belongs,

That I've often thought I'd like to know  
Why all this hue and cry,  
And why these precious privileges  
Our lords to us deny.

For, if one man was not complete  
Without a better half,  
How can a nation's council hold  
Without this prop or staff?

She may, perhaps, lack wisdom  
To guide "the ship of state,"  
But she need not be the captain,  
Just first or second mate;

For there are many offices,  
Of county, town, or state,  
Which she could fill with honor,  
And in time might legislate.

She would not touch the tariff,  
Nor steal the extra cash,  
But quickly would prohibit  
All intoxicating trash.

She would bottle all the grape juice  
In unfermented wine,  
And sell it to the laborers,  
Without licenses or fines.

But intoxicating liquors,  
Too poisonous for drinks,  
Would find their way to ditches  
Through sewer pipes and sinks.

No criminals nor paupers  
From any foreign shore  
Should land at Castle Garden,  
From hence, forevermore.

No foreign prince or syndicate  
Should gain, by wealth or power,  
Our manufactories or land  
To own a single hour.

These syndicates thus forming,  
Run by a foreign head,  
Now make our beer, and own our land,  
And bake our very bread.

I will not tell all they would do,  
If women took the lead,  
But surely all our voters  
Would know how to write and read.

Then capital and labor  
Would cease to be at strife,  
For equal rights and justice  
Would be the rule of life.

But I pause, without alluding  
To other errors great and small,  
And ask you to extend  
The rights of suffrage to all.

L. of C.

## To Let

I've a mansion to let,  
And, just by the way,  
Shall ask the fair tenant  
Some rental to pay;  
She must love and honor  
And likewise obey.

When any young lady  
With these terms will comply,  
I shall be most happy  
To receive her reply.  
So now, my dear ladies,  
Pray do not forget  
That I have a bachelor's  
Mansion to let.

Answer—

Ah! you've a mansion to let,  
And in it would live,  
And ask the fair tenant  
Three payments to give.  
I've a heap of affection,  
Which I could bestow,  
For a season, at least,  
On a mansion below.

I should render the honor,  
At least unto you,  
For it's easy to honor  
Where honor is due.  
Of course, you expect  
In all business affairs  
To furnish the mansion,  
And keep up repairs.

In business agreements,  
I think it is true,  
Till the lease is run out  
The last payment's not due;  
And then, should I fail  
To bring it about,  
You'd have the great pleasure  
Of moving me out.

So, if the mansion is ready,  
And you're not a dunce,  
I'll make my arrangements  
To move in at once.

## What's in a Kiss

What's in a kiss?—"Just hope and bliss,"  
They tell us fondly o'er and o'er,  
And then with loving words implore  
Us to believe there's nothing more.

But one who understands the art  
Will tell how kisses reach the heart,  
When through the eyes the soul's caress  
Conveys a lofty tenderness.

Then through sweet lips will softly steal  
The secrets which no words reveal;  
They, like a mirror, will impart  
The mysteries of a truant heart.

Who would with lying lips deceive  
Leaves kisses which in silence grieve.  
Let reason share in love's delight,  
And scorn deception's lasting blight.

Who'd know the full and free delight  
Of truly loving kisses' might  
Must keep the precepts of their youth,  
For valued kisses smack of truth.

Then they hold more than hope and bliss,—  
Hold full content and happiness.

## What Is Love

We have met, and, simply meeting,  
Passed the common words of greeting.  
Glancing at your eye and age,  
As one scans the title-page  
Of a new and unread book,  
Was there magic in your look?

'Twas a strange, mysterious power  
That enthralled me from that hour;  
But, like the critic, student, sage,  
I ask for more than title-page.  
Would it disturb this outward calm  
Were I to seek the hidden charm?

Disturb it not, as leaf to bower;  
Unconscious pride has princely power;  
Fineness and fitness well combined  
We ever seek, but seldom find;  
But when once found, though love be blind  
'Twill recognize its own sweet kind.

What makes the waiting heart rejoice  
At the sweet accents of a voice?—  
'Tis the same law that guides the spheres,  
Or controls the source of human tears,  
That brings the wind from out its source,  
And holds the circlets through their course.

Then seek this law, to us unknown,  
Which makes love claim its very own,  
And then forget both time and place  
While gazing on a loving face.  
All hearts respond to music grand  
When keys are swept by a master hand.

Where truth and honor are combined  
(The rarest gifts from the hand divine),  
With conscience guiding a keen delight,  
Naught can fill our lives with nameless blight:  
For, as the waters fill the sea,  
Our little world holds you and me.

Oh, love! life's sweetest mystery,  
That brightens all eternity!

### My Cranky Clock

My cranky clock sits on the shelf,  
And has the brass to run itself.  
Sometimes it's fast, sometimes it's slow;  
It often strikes, yet still will go.

And when I wind it once a week,  
'Twill laugh aloud and nearly speak.  
You think I've no reason to thus complain,  
But hear me out, and I'll explain.

It must be for the want of strength  
Its hours are never quite of length.  
Of all the strokes in twenty-four  
(I've watched and counted o'er and o'er),

The clock and I do quite agree  
The longest is from two to three.  
Both Jack and I can hardly tell  
Which one of all's the shortest spell.

At break of day, from five to six,  
I'm sure it makes its fastest ticks;  
But Jack avers he'll prove by men  
From half past nine to half past ten

Is much the shortest he can trace  
Upon that old clock's dial face.  
Once that old clock, when I was sick,  
Just had a fit and wouldn't tick.

It woke me up in such a fright,—  
The time was dead, and it was night,  
And it was dark, yes, black as death,—  
It nearly took away my breath.

Ere this I had not known its worth;  
I thought that clock just run the earth;  
But it has taken streaks since then;  
I can't tell how, I can't tell when.

But Jack comes home, he's had big fun,  
Declares that clock has fairly spun.  
Now this is the puzzle, as you'll see,  
Which is the crank? which of us three?  
The clock or Jack, or is it me?

### To Friends Declining an Invitation to a Banquet

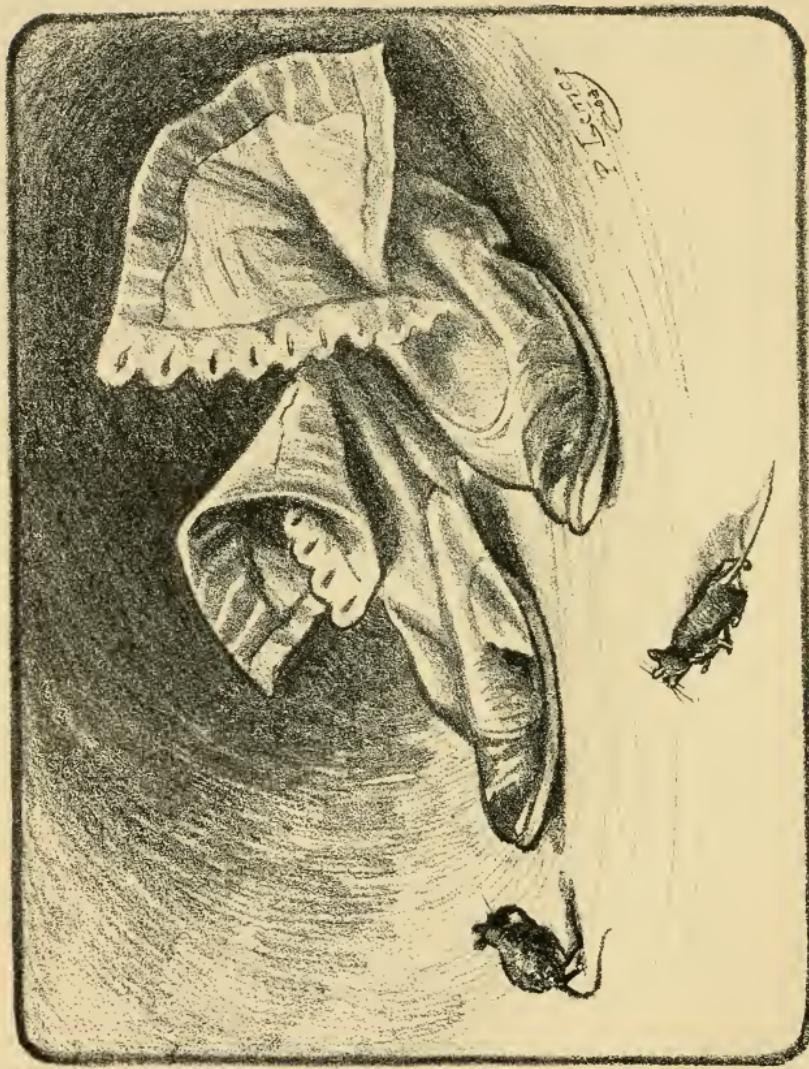
With this I send you kindly greeting,  
And gladly would attend your meeting,  
But muddy roads and cloudy skies  
And fate decree it otherwise.

Although I can not take each hand,  
You'll feel my presence, understand.  
Though other tones these words repeat,  
Through waves of space our spirits meet.

Most heartily I wish you joy,  
Life's blessings all without alloy.  
We lightly change from place to place,  
But sadly miss each kindly face.

In months of absence how it cheers  
To think of long, long, passing years!  
What bonds of friendship, good and true,  
I have imposed and found with you.





OLD SHOES

And though you miss, when I am gone,  
Some strain of music through your song  
('Tis selfish I should wish you pain),  
I'm glad you miss my minor strain.

And when again we're blessed to meet,  
Some dear old songs we will repeat.  
Now your kind indulgence I implore;  
Good wishes send, and nothing more.

### Old Shoes

I sit here impatient, my feet on a chair;  
There's something amiss, I just vow and declare;  
I never once more will go out on the street  
With these horrid, old shoes again on my feet.

They've grown so ill-shaped, all stretched at the side,  
For more than a month they have wounded my pride;  
Some buttons are off, one's ripped at the heel;  
I can't half express the disgust that I feel.

I'm sure they detract from the rest of my clothes,  
The polish all off to the tips of their toes;  
They've done well, it's true; I've had them half-soled,  
So they're surely, decidedly, shockingly old.

“Entirely worthless,” you’ve just heard me say,  
“So I’ll rip off the buttons, and throw them away.”  
Just here one has seemed to stare up in my face,  
And whisper, “Remember we each knew our place.

“We’ve carried you through some dreadful bad  
weather

Since we three good friends have been so close  
together;

The marks on our uppers, the scars on our soles,  
Show plainly enough our part on the roll.

“We’ve quietly watched and measured your paces,  
With most constant care kept you well in the traces;  
Some blunders we’ve saved you of which we’ll not  
speak,

By expressing disfavor with a sharp, little squeak.

“Let me tell you one thing, ere you ruthlessly rend  
The last tie between us, dear, trusted, old friend;  
In your ups and your downs, in your last, reckless  
races,

We’ve stood both the rough and the slippery places.

“On one or the other you’ve thrown your full heft,  
And we’ve seen that your honor has never got left.  
When we made your acquaintance, it was a tight  
squeeze

To keep up connections, you were so hard to please.

“Some time in the future, some long day in June,  
You’ll think, ‘Ah, perhaps, we have parted too  
soon;’

When the corns and the bunions puff out at the side,  
And the wretched, old pain has devoured all your  
pride.

“Then you’ll think of the soft, solid comfort we’ve  
had,

That in parting so soon you were really half mad,  
Or, at least, must have been in a fit of the blues  
When you cast us aside as worthless, old shoes.”

### *Money-Bags*

I’m living in a little world, not wholly by myself,  
For there are many fairies here, and many a little  
elf;

We’re plagued for locomotion, we’re limited in  
space,

And all these pesky little imps keep getting out of  
place.

I plan some great achievement; on their help I must  
insist,

But the little scamp called Money-bags is surely to  
be missed.

I call out grave detectives, Industry looks around,  
And soons reports, with gravity, “He’s nowhere to  
be found.”

Necessity moves uneasily, and, breathing a gentle sigh,  
Remarks, with quiet candor, “You’re looking quite too high;”  
But Folly joins with Vanity, crying, “Out upon such stuff;”  
And both declare in concert, “You don’t look high enough.”

Imprudence, Sloth, and Envy say, “He’s loafing round with Chance;”

While Innocence and Cunning say, “He’s out with Circumstance.”

Indifference says, “Don’t worry, we can live for many days,

And get along without him, and plan in various ways.”

“Old Lawrence” says, “Don’t hurry, you’ll find my logic sound;

Just set a trap and catch him; he’s sure to come around.”

Here Prudence says, “Be careful, don’t trust him long from sight,

For with his protracted absence Convenience feels the slight.”

And thus the time is wasted in much argument and strife,

Till the tyrant Indecision is the bane of all my life.  
While all are idly waiting Dame Fortune passes by,  
For Energy is prostrate; I ask of Reason, “Why?”

The answer is decisive, “The scamp is hard to find;  
He’s hidden now from Justice, and she’s both dumb  
and blind;  
He slipped away from Wisdom’s grasp, very much  
to her disgust;  
Has ever since been smuggled in the rings of every  
trust.

“Let Vigilance and Honesty no longer frauds endure;  
Leave Envy, Wrong, and Avarice, ’twill soon effect  
a cure.

This would soon correct the rascal, that’s grown so  
overbold,  
And show his humble origin; he was always bought  
and sold.”

All are scorning old Necessity; he is his next of kin;  
It’s downright inconsistent that we nearly worship  
him,  
Right here in our America, it seems exceeding  
strange,  
Where our money was created just for medium of  
exchange.

## MORAL—

If we would do by others just exactly as we should,  
Then we'd find they'd do by us just exactly as they  
should.

*If He but Had My Wisdom*

If he but had my wisdom, or I possessed his strength,  
Such a mighty combination would run through this  
century's length.

You would see a silver airship that would climb the  
rainbow's track,  
And visit Mar's inhabitants long before it would  
come back.

There would be hydraulic mining done in minted,  
golden showers,  
Till fives and tens and twenties fell like raindrops  
on the flowers.

You could glide across the ocean with the swiftness  
of the wind,  
And bring from foreign countries gems of every  
form and kind;

For all the modest mermaids would be quite in love  
with me,  
And bring all their wondrous treasures from the  
bottom of the sea.

You would see a horseless carriage speeding up and  
down the grade  
That would leave the automobile altogether in the  
shade.

It's then some new inventions would be running  
smooth as silk;  
You'd be supplied with butter made without a drop  
of milk;  
For I know a fine location which, without a doubt,  
would pay—  
You would see a large, new creamery in the unused  
Milky Way.

All the crimes would be abolished; there would be  
no time to run.  
Criminals would be apprehended long before their  
deeds were done.  
Then the old man, always watching through the  
darkness to the light,  
Would report to all the papers all the mysteries of  
the night.

Marconi's talking wonder we could easily eclipse,  
For this same old Moony lately gave me several  
tips.  
So, if he but had my wisdom, or I possessed his  
strength,  
Such a mighty combination would run through this  
century's length.

## The Sea

O the sea, the sea! the wild, wide sea,  
Is a constant source of joy to me.  
Restless, tireless, and turbulent tide,  
Fairest of all, thou art nature's bride.

Kissing the sunshine, wedding the storm,  
You eagerly welcome both night and morn.  
Mountains are silent, the stars quite profound;  
Ocean was given both motion and sound.

Source of the raindrops, that earth's verdure  
renew,  
Quickly dispelling volcanoes from view;  
Torrents embracing, soon forming a part  
Of mystical music, born in your heart.

Storm-driven billows, with beauty wrought,  
Ebbing and flowing, dissolving to naught,  
Together ye speak of birth and of shroud,  
Foam-crested billows so quickly plowed.

Mists from thy bosom, wondrously fair,  
Triumphant in beauty, rise through the air,  
Cradle of color and rainbow to be,  
Born in the clouds, but conceived in the sea.

These constant motions but faintly impart  
The life-giving force and throb of your heart.  
Forever and ever your wavelets repeat  
Anthems both solemn and grandly complete.

### Rain

Dark above and black below,  
Slush and mud wherever you go;  
Mud and slush make the travel slow,  
And through the gutters black waters flow.

The house is dumb as with silent pain,  
And footsteps hushed by mud and stain;  
The wind is stilled to a soft refrain,  
As it sobs and sighs through this ceaseless rain.

The crops all ruined, the farmer blue,  
His faithful wife in a dreadful stew,  
The children caged, with nothing to do,  
All, all, alike, wish the rain were through.

But it patters and splashes on roof and sill,  
And seems to enjoy its own sweet will,  
As it rushes in torrents or ripples in rills,  
From the mountain's side or the wooded hills.

The town seems wrapped in a thick, dark haze,  
That has long shut out the sun's bright rays;  
It has rained for nights; it has rained for days;  
Still it rains, and rains, and rains always.

The men all grumble and call it rough,  
The schoolboys say it is awful tough,  
The girls declare it is horrid stuff,  
And we all agree that we've had enough.

Still dark above and black below,  
It first rains fast and then rains slow.  
Will it ever cease this raining so?  
The weather-prophet don't even know.

## October

The lovely, bright, and perfect days  
Of October now are here,  
With all their gathered golden wealth  
For the crowning of the year.

The promises of May and June,  
With their leafy buds and flowers,  
You have fulfilled abundantly,  
Through sunshine, shade, and showers.

All the perfumes of the seasons  
    You have gathered in your fruits;  
All the colors of Flora's kingdom  
    Are woven in their suits.

Every tree in the old, old forests  
    Has put on its tinted leaves,  
In honor of your coming  
    With your bright and golden sheaves.

While time turns his lunar circles  
    That the changing seasons bring,  
Among these loyal subjects you  
    Will ever be crowned their king.

### Cider-Apples

Cider-apples, cider-apples, cider-apples, if you please,  
Cider-apples, cider-apples, just the refuse from the  
    trees,  
Green, brown, and golden russets, and a few old  
    Tallman sweets,  
Such a wild conglomeration I'm sure one seldom  
    meets.

Cider-apples seem so worthless, all strewn upon the  
    ground,  
So wormy, bruised, and rotting, no choice ones to  
    be found.

What can we do to save them? They're surely of no  
use,  
Unless we manage someway to just extract their  
juice.

Let us gather cider-apples, and truly learn their  
worth  
By changing to a beverage well-known throughout  
the earth.  
It's a hard and tedious process, for they must all be  
crushed  
Through a mill in perfect order, without one speck  
of rust.

Then we have a drink perfected to compare with all  
the rest,  
Most delicious and refreshing, by far the very best.  
'Tis then our cider-apples, or apple cider, if you  
please,  
No more is counted worthless or refuse from the  
trees.

### Pen and Ink

I was asked to write a poem and given pen and ink;  
"You couldn't write without them," he said, with  
knowing wink.

“But you don’t catch my meaning; you asked me once to choose.

Just take them for your subject; you will not dare refuse.”

So I take them for my subject, just simply pen and ink;

“Queer subject for a poem,” as any one may think. If I should write a letter to a man I can not see, I know that he’d be happy to get one line from me.

’Twould wake the silent echoes all through his heart and brain;

He’d think the halcyon days of youth had all come back again.

And what would I put in this letter? It seems so hard to tell

Of days so long and lonely, while in health I’m very well;

That my love has ne’er grown weary through his long and dreary stay,

But my heart is like a bird-cage when the bird has flown away;

That I see his face in dreamland, in silence of the night,

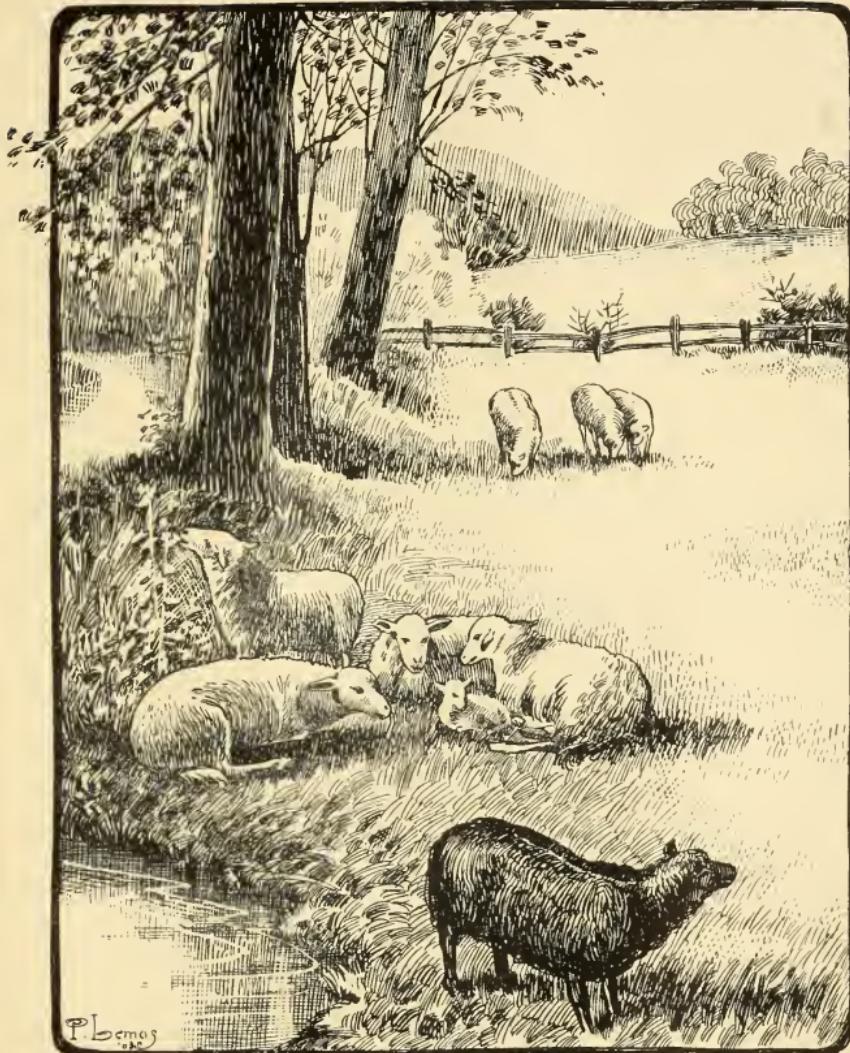
But it vanishes with shadows in the gleam of morning light,

Making life more pain than pleasure with these  
meetings of extremes,  
Till my life seems only living just these moments of  
my dreams.  
Then I waken with a struggle when I think I hear  
him sigh;  
Again I live our parting o'er and hear his sad  
Good-by.

Thus would I fill my letter with sweet nonsense  
much like this,  
And he would know I wrote it and had sealed it  
with a kiss.  
If one could not get letters from their loved ones,  
who could think  
How much sweetness is embodied in the senseless  
pen and ink?

### The Old Black Sheep

The one black sheep of my father's flock  
Would some way get mixed with the other stock;  
Although unwelcome and much in the way,  
It seemed determined right there to stay.  
Its fleece held the marks of hoofs and horns,  
While closely embedded were covered thorns;  
Burrs and thistles were hidden deep  
In the wool of this old, worthless sheep.



P. L. Morris  
1885

THE OLD BLACK SHEEP



Till utterly worthless seemed the wool,  
Of sticks and briars it was so full;  
Yet one could trace a glittering thread,  
Which might have improved if properly fed.  
But kicked and cuffed and knocked about,  
Sometimes fenced in and then locked out,  
'Twas not much wonder it went astray;  
Poor thing, it knew no better way.

Thus alone, it wandered where  
The mountain-tops were bleak and bare,  
Until it came to a rippling stream,  
And followed it down through the meadows green,  
Where it basked in the sunshine of God's pure light,  
But felt the stings in the frosts of night.  
Sometimes it fared better, sometimes fared worse,  
But ever seemed like a thing accursed;

Till at last it sank by the river's brink,  
Where the banks were so steep it could not drink.  
Oh! is there ever more piteous plight  
Than dying of thirst with the stream in sight?  
Thus the poor creature suffered day after day,  
Till a wandering hunter passed that way.  
As suffering creatures move the heart,  
So the hunter stopped with a sudden start,  
Then doffed his hat in the river's brink,  
And brought to the suffering creature drink,

And felt repaid by the dumb surprise  
That crept up through the creature's eyes.

Thus was formed a golden link;  
Blessed was the hand for giving drink.  
Gladly the hunter would have borne it away,  
In the mists of the morning, dull and gray,  
But the sheep was shocked by the sudden strain  
And forced to cry out in its bitter pain.  
Compelled to go by the morning light,  
He sought her again at shade of night;  
But the creature had perished during the day,  
And vultures had stripped its fleece away.  
So he opened the earth with tender care,  
And buried the carcass then and there.

Then he gathered the wool in his haversack,  
And carried it miles and miles on his back,  
Till at last he came to a market town,  
Where experts said it was soft as down,  
That gloss and texture were both complete,  
For royal heads or for fairies' feet.  
So the hunter found when the fleece was sold  
That he was rich in his counted gold.  
Thus worthy works of human kind  
Are often lost to the sordid mind,—  
Are like the gloss of this silken thread,  
That never was known till the sheep was dead.

## The Fellow

I remember well when this face was fair,  
Not a thread of silver ran through my hair,  
My checks and my lips had a ruddy glow  
Which only the innocent ever know.

I loved all unwisely, yet far too well;  
'Twas the old, old story—I sinned and I fell.  
Why tell how I passed that season of woe,  
And brought back revenge from the regions below?

When scorned by fair women and jeered at by men,  
I vowed that my vengeance should fall upon them;  
'Twas thus I sunk low in the vortex of sin,  
And long, weary years I traveled therein.

Then came to our den a Samaritan bold,  
To bring back the lost ones into the fold.  
My God! could it be that I beheld him  
Who long years ago had taught me to sin?

With meekness and sorrow he heard my despair,  
Then bowed low his head in a most earnest prayer.  
He asked the good Saviour to ever forgive,  
And grant that, though sinners, we even might live.

I learned from his prayer of God's infinite love,  
And peace like a spirit came down from above;  
Though bad as he'd wronged me that far-distant day,  
I'd sown the same seed all the long, wretched way.

But as I joined in the prayer, "Dear Father above,  
Who drowns all our sin in Thine infinite love,"  
I heard this plain answer, "Oh! look up and live;  
As you have forgiven, I also forgive."

### Forgive

If I could write some matchless words  
To live when I am dead,  
I'd tell where God's most wondrous truths  
Are ever to be read.

Not only on the printed page,  
Which men in parchment bind,  
But traced upon the seething waves,  
And borne upon the wind.

In wondrous tints of rainbow hues,  
Munificent and grand,  
And wrought with beauty on the rocks,  
Indelible they stand.

On every tree and hillside shrub,  
Whoever seeks can trace,  
In every varying shade of light,  
Inscriptions of His grace.

In human hearts, where length of days  
Is counted by good deeds,  
The blinded eyes of suffering ones  
Discern them in their needs.

To one who seeks for hidden truths  
They ever, ever live;  
The grandest of all hidden truths  
Is learning to forgive.

### Sunset

In cloudlets on the mountain's side  
Solemn silence settles down,  
Which to my childish fancies held  
The terrors of a frown.

Unfathomed were thy mysteries  
Of starlit, azure skies;  
The northern lights seemed dancing sprites,  
And whispering winds were sighs.

Belated cowboys' shouts are heard  
From far-off distant hills,  
And frightened birds give plaintive notes,  
With wild, discordant thrills.

Then quickly hushed to rest again,  
The silence reigns supreme;  
These are the choicest hours of life,  
Which hold day's fading gleam.

When shades of night are falling fast,  
The thrushes' notes are stilled,  
And hearts, though dumbly praising, are  
With adoration filled.

The dew forms on the lily's leaf,  
A hush is in the air,  
As if the day in dying had  
Invoked a silent prayer.

Instinctively the child of earth  
Is moved to thoughts above,  
And through day's changing circles  
Claims God's eternal love.

### The Valley of Silence

I was brought to the valley of silence,  
The dim, voiceless valley alone;  
Not a sigh, a breath, or a heart-beat,  
Not even the sound of my own.

The hush was so solemn and holy,  
And God was so wondrously near,  
With great love, so precious and perfect,  
I knew not an atom of fear.

He who noteth the fall of the sparrows,  
Ne'er loses a small grain of sand.  
He gathers the mists into dewdrops,  
And divideth the seas from the land.

The stars in the heavens He ruleth,  
And none ever fall from His sight.  
Can we question the infinite wisdom  
And power which forever is right?

He gave His own life to His children;  
Thereafter we ever are blessed,  
For life is surely eternal,  
And death to the weary sweet rest.

## No Creed

I have no creed, save this, I know  
Where God's pure sunlight falls below;  
On Christian, heathen, pagan land,  
All worship as they understand.

The greatest interpreter is truth,  
In every land of age and youth;  
And all by this fine standard given  
Must find their way at last to heaven.

Through crooked ways, and journeyings long,  
And suffering much from evils strong,  
All bow beneath the chastening rod,  
And learn at last to worship God.

While groping blindly here below,  
We reap alike just as we sow;  
And dare we question His great love?  
Who rules below must rule above.

While doing here the best we can,  
We're working nearest wisdom's plan;  
And wait not for a future time  
To bring us peace and joy sublime.

## December

I'm sitting in the twilight of the dumb, old, dying  
year,  
And all the earth is barren, so solemn, dull, and  
drear;  
The silent, flitting snowbirds, the sighing of the  
wind,  
Breathe a sad and tender requiem quite in keeping  
with my mind.

I, too, am fast approaching this old, solemn time of  
year,  
And the drear, old, dread December will very soon  
be here.  
All my morn was gray and cloudy, with streaks of  
lighter gray,  
Till it seemed but little sunshine would ever cross  
my way.

It was well-nigh past the noonday when the sun  
shone clear and bright,  
Enveloping my being in a flood of heavenly light.  
As one athirst in the desert will leap at the water's  
sound,  
So my heart, long silent within me, came to life with  
a sudden bound.

Then I basked in the golden sunshine, unheeding  
the flight of time,  
A hallowed, passing semblance of a holier and hap-  
pier clime.

Ah! alas for my sad awakening! the dream has  
passed away,  
But has left a blessed imagery of a higher and hap-  
pier day.

While sitting here in comfort, with peace and plenty  
blessed,  
As one after toil and sorrow has a welcoming sense  
of rest,  
At times some dark and somber clouds will flit across  
the way,  
And make me sad and lonely with dread of a dark,  
chill day.

While pausing, I look backward through the long  
and varied way,  
With a sense of keen enjoyment towards the twi-  
light's golden ray,  
For whosoever is guided by One who is always right  
Is sure of a glorious sunset ere the black, December  
night.



JUN 26 1903



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